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MR. ROOSEVELT'S radio address of July 24 was less an outline of a new plan than a plea for support for a program already announced, especially the "blanket code" in industry. This code establishes a maximum of forty hours a week for clerical employees and minimum pay of from $12 to $15. For industrial workers it sets up a maximum week of thirty-five hours, with minimum pay of from thirty to forty cents an hour. Employers are asked to put the scheme into effect voluntarily from September to December, inclusive, or until special codes are promulgated for their industries. Mr. Roosevelt's talk on the radio was a continuation of his effort to establish a war psychology to meet the industrial emergency, and as such seems to us exceedingly effective. He exposed a gloved hand rather than a mailed fist, but he let just a glimpse of the latter appear beneath his coat sleeve, while George N. Peek, head of the Farm Adjustment Administration, speaking on the same day to a group of grain men, made no bones of the intention to resort to force if necessary. Critically examined, Mr. Roosevelt's program ignores certain traits of human nature and certain principles of economics which we discuss in our editorial in this issue on Gentlemen Prefer Profits. But the program will not be critically examined—by many. It depends for success considerably on sentimentalism and considerably on coercion, but in the World War we Americans developed an insatiable appetite for the former and uncomplaining docility under the latter. The program will appeal to many as better than a nation "half boom and half broke," to use Mr. Roosevelt's apt phrase, and it may work—at least for a while.

THE BREAK in stock prices did not unduly disturb the Roosevelt Administration. The break in grain prices did. This is not surprising. Speculators were the only direct losers in the sharp drop on the stock exchanges. Production and pay rolls could be affected only indirectly, and even then only if industry lost its head because of the panic and began curtailing its activity. The President, confident of the ultimate success of his recovery program, seems to have felt that business would not be adversely affected by the tempest in Wall Street so long as official Washington remained calm. He doubtless knew that any precipitate action on his part, such as a move to close the New York Stock Exchange, would simply increase the panic. It might have led the general public to suspect that the collapse was due not to a sudden deflation of a runaway speculative boom, which was the real cause, but to hidden defects in the current recovery or in the Roosevelt program, or to a lack of confidence on the part of the Administration. Instead the Administration took the position that the stock gamblers had overreached themselves and were paying the usual penalty. That this attitude involved a certain amount of risk is understood in Washington. The effect of the Roosevelt program on business has to date been mainly psychological. If a real panic were to develop and the present feeling of buoyant hopefulness were to be undermined, the recovery program would be endangered. By minimizing the importance of the break, Mr. Roosevelt has apparently succeeded, so far as we can tell at this writing, in localizing the panic.

THE DROP in grain prices presented a different problem. Farmers suffered real cash losses as a result of the drastic decline on the Chicago Board of Trade. When wheat fell more than twenty-five cents in two days, it meant that commission merchants were offering the farmers twenty-five cents less for their wheat delivered at the terminals. While the Administration could look with a certain amount of indifference upon the stock-gambling spree, it was deeply concerned by the probable reaction of the farmers to the panic on the Board of Trade. Some officials felt that the slump would help to convince the farmers of the necessity of supporting the crop-control plan, but a majority realized that sharp fluctuations in grain prices might have another effect, for many farmers have tended to identify the recent price rise with the successful operation of the Roosevelt program. Hence Secretary Wallace deemed it necessary to stem the panic by fixing a minimum level for grain prices. In this he received the cooperation of the Chicago Board of Trade, which was anxious to halt the slump because a number of its prominent members were carrying heavy commitments in wheat, which they would have had to dump on the market at

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any price in order to cover their margins. Secretary Wallace's action was not based on the authority of any law but simply on a mutual agreement between himself and the Board of Trade. The agreement also limits the extent to which grain prices may fluctuate in any one trading day. If this scheme fails to work, that is, if it fails to prevent another unwarranted inflation in grain values, there can be little doubt that the Administration will exercise its authority under the Agricultural Adjustment Act and license the whole grain trade, thus bringing the grain market directly under government control.

SECRETARY OF WAR DERN, following the lead of his colleague who is at the head of the Navy Department, has asked for $135,000,000 from the public-works fund of $3,300,000,000 for the purpose of "modernizing" the army. And, like Secretary of the Navy Swanson, he seeks to justify his request on the ground that the expenditure of this sum would give employment to thousands of workers. It is upon such occasions as these that we thank our stars that a man named Harold Ickes is responsible for the allocation and expenditure of the huge public-works fund. Secretary Ickes has flatly declared that the money intrusted to his care is "very precious" and will not be squandered or spent upon any public works except those that are "sane both from an engineering and a social standpoint." He has intimated that he is willing to give the War Department a reasonable sum for work that is absolutely necessary, but the sum will not be anywhere near $135,000,000. Since the President has already shown that he subscribes to the Swanson theory that naval expenditures are "socially justifiable" if they provide employment, Secretary Dern might win if he chose to carry his fight to the White House. If this happens, we must depend upon the proved fighting qualities of Secretaries Ickes and Perkins to block this latest effort to use the unemployment situation as an excuse for enlarging the military establishment of the country.

WE SINCERELY HOPE that Secretary Ickes will also take a determined stand against the new naval construction program before it is too late. This program was approved by the President before Mr. Ickes was named Public Works Administrator and the latter may well urge that every possible dollar be spent usefully. Until recently the Japanese militarists used the Manchurian situation as their excuse for increasing the military budget. Now they point to the Roosevelt-Swanson naval program. Moreover, in the new budget, the largest in Japan's history, naval construction for the first time in years takes precedence over the needs of the army. An expenditure of approximately $180,000,000 in addition to that which had already been approved, was hurriedly provided for soon after it was announced in Washington that the Roosevelt Administration planned to spend $238,000,000 on new ships. There can be no doubt that the United States and Japan are on the verge of a disastrous naval-armaments race. Here again the enlightened progressives in the Administration have a duty to perform. They can remain silent and let the militarist element follow its natural bent, or they can challenge it, carrying their cause to the people, who we feel sure will support them, and thus probably prevent the country from being plunged into an era of militarism which would lead us into new wars.

THE EARLY END of the "noble experiment" is assured. When the first truly Southern States, Alabama, Arkansas, and Tennessee, voted for repeal, the last hope of the prohibition forces vanished. With Oregon, which also has gone "wet," twenty States out of the necessary thirty-six have decreed the death of the Eighteenth Amendment. It now seems not unlikely, as Jouett Shouse predicts, that all forty-eight States will ratify, a unanimity desirable as a demonstration of the extent of rebellion against the domination of minority pressure groups. Various factors are contributing to this striking reversal which only a few years ago was generally declared impossible of achievement because of the small minorities which can block a constitutional amendment. There is the widespread conviction, after over a decade of observation and trial, that prohibition as a means of promoting temperance has proved a flat failure. There is the revolt against the unwise attempt to regulate personal habits by statute. There is the need and desire for increased sources of tax revenue. There is the repudiation of Republican rule and all its works which finds expression in enacting this measure sponsored by the Democrats. There is the good old band wagon, on which Americans love to climb. And, finally, there is the fermented juice of the grape, or its numerous dynamic equivalents, which since before Noah the human race has enjoyed quaffing.

FURTHER CONFIRMATION that criminality and thuggery are integral parts of the Nazi regime is furnished by the unveiling in Weimar of a memorial tablet to the murderers of Walther Rathenau. At the dedicatory ceremonies attended by high Nazi officials, Colonel Roehm, chief of staff of the Brown Army, eulogized the assassins. The bronze table commemorating the murdered statesman, as devoted a public servant as it was ever a people's fortune to place in high office, had previously been removed. On the same day, the body of Dr. Wilhelm Schaefer was found in a ditch on the outskirts of Frankfurt-on-the-Main, riddled with bullets. It was he who reported to the police in November, 1931, the notorious Bokheimer document outlining a plan for a terrorist coup d'état in Hesse which called for slaughter of Nazi opponents. Dr. Schaefer had survived one previous attack by brown-shirt gangsters. In Leipzig, Nazi storm troopers assaulted without provocation an American citizen of Jewish race, Philip Zuckerman. With his wife and two other relatives, he had been watching a parade. One of his relatives, as he himself told United States Consul Raymond H. Geist, who came to Zuckerman's hospital bedside to take his affidavit, had a long beard "making it easy to pick him out as a Jew." As the tail end of the procession passed, a number of storm troopers dropped out of the ranks, rushed back, and assaulted these spectators. Zuckerman cried out "I am an American," but he was set upon, beaten into unconsciousness, kicked in the head, and trampled upon.

AS IF these individual outrages were not sufficient, the Nazi regime has now officially decreed the punishment of death for any who "spread atrocity reports," for any who engage in "subversive activity," or for those who import "subversive" literature from outside of Germany. This means, of course, that the lives of any not in sympathy with the Nazi regime, already in grave peril from the unhindered assaults such as those on Dr. Schaefer and Mr. Zuckerman,

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will be legally forfeit on the basis of suspicion or of a frame-up such as, it is now pretty well known, characterized the "Communist" burning of the Reichstag. Death will also be the penalty, according to another decree, of any attempt, whether successful or not, on the life of any member of the Nazi army. It will suffice for an *agent provocateur* to fire a pistol from a window to jeopardize the life of any whom the Nazis wish to arrest as responsible therefor. With such mounting evidences of the character of Hitlerism, it is no wonder that the boycott against it assumes worldwide proportions. In London the National Joint Council of the labor movement has issued a manifesto appealing to "all who share with British workers horror and detestation of the destruction of human liberty, rights, and citizenship in Germany to refrain until further notice" from buying German goods and services. Meanwhile a great congress in Amsterdam representing the Jews of the world calls on all people, regardless of race, to do likewise. The boycott should hasten the Nazi day of reckoning which Philipp Scheidemann predicts.

THE SENSATIONAL DISCLOSURES in Pennsylvania of starvation wages and child labor and sweatshop conditions presented a challenge to the State which Governor Pinchot has met by appointing Charlotte E. Carr to the post of Secretary of Industry and Labor. Miss Carr is a strong exponent of social legislation. She will carry to the last ditch the fight against the sort of exploitation that has been exposed in the recent investigations. She is very close to Secretary Perkins, both personally and in her point of view, having worked for years in the Department of Labor in New York under Miss Perkins. The Governor made his choice in the face of a bitter attack upon Miss Carr by her predecessor, A. M. Northrup. Dr. Northrup resigned from office after charging Miss Carr, who as director of the Bureau of Inspection of the Department had been largely responsible for the investigation of labor conditions, with fomenting labor troubles and encouraging strikers. With Miss Carr in office we may expect the enforcement of labor laws and the speedy enactment of necessary new legislation in a State which has long been an industrial sore spot.

THAT PROFITS inevitably take precedence over principles in the industrial system under which we live was proved again in Pittsburgh recently when the newsboys struck against an effort of the daily newspapers to raise the wholesale price from $2 to $2.25 a hundred, reducing the boys' net proceeds at three cents a copy from $1 to seventy-five cents. Alarmed at the specter of advertising losses when distribution of the newspapers was halted, the city's three dailies joined in a cry of "Communist agitation" and went to extreme lengths in distorting the facts and making use of the police to break the movement. The supposedly liberal Scripps-Howard *Press,* which has supported minimum wages and the rights of employees to organize in unions of their own choosing under the National Industrial Recovery Act, united with Paul Block's *Post-Gazette* and Hearst's *Sun-Telegraph* against the newsboys. The *Press,* militant enemy of sweatshops, of bad conditions in mining towns, and of contractors who pay starvation wages on city jobs, labeled one strike orator, who campaigned for Roosevelt last autumn, a Communist. Some of the newsboys said that the Police Department refused a permit for a street meeting or parade and that no auditoriums were available because no hall owners would risk the ill-will of the newspapers. The police broke up a meeting in the headquarters of the Unemployed Citizens' League and arrested several youths on the ground that they were not newsboys and that no others could assist in a strike. Admittedly there was some violence. On the first day of the strike newspapers were seized from delivery trucks and torn into shreds, so that the streets were littered with debris to such an extent that it became a menace to traffic. Eventually the newspapers agreed to allow the newsboys a profit of ninety cents a hundred copies.

A TRIAL for extortion and blackmail is usually considered news, especially when the alleged victim is prominent. In the Court of General Sessions in New York City, on Tuesday, July 18, began the trial of a Mrs. Frances W. King, charged with seeking to extort $50,000 from Bruce Barton, author, publicist, and advertising executive. Testimony brought out that on a previous occasion Mr. Barton had paid $25,000 in consequence of a suit for alienation of affections brought by Mrs. King's husband. *The Nation* would welcome a press practice of not printing scandals involving the private lives of individuals. But, alas, this is not yet newspaper custom unless the complete suppression for a week on the part of certain New York dailies of all mention of this startling and dramatic court proceeding may inaugurate a new journalistic policy. As it is, the New York *Times* alone in the morning, and the *Sun* alone in the evening field, gave complete day-by-day accounts of the trial. The *World-Telegram* printed two brief items which told little. The tabloid *Daily News* likewise printed two items in uncharacteristically unsensational fashion. Mr. Hearst's *American* and *Evening Journal* and the *Daily Mirror*, to whom a sensation of this kind generally appeals, printed not a line. Neither did the respectable *Herald Tribune* and *Evening Post*. We should be inclined to congratulate these newspapers on their unprecedented reserve were it not for a lurking suspicion that this new-found reticence may bear some faint relation to the desire to keep the good-will of the great advertising agency of Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn.

NEW MEANS of transportation, it is often remarked, give new knowledge of geography even to those who do not travel. Ships were the first great revealers of the world to stay-at-homes, but the airplane has lately been making a contribution much more considerable than would have seemed possible in regard to the face of an earth nearly every wart and mole of which had become known before men began to use sky trails. So long as the airplane followed the routes of steamships and railroads, it gave us little new, but since it has taken to hugging the Arctic Circle in order to shorten distances and keep within close reach of land, it has made dozens of hitherto unknown places in Labrador, Greenland, and Siberia seem like suburbs of New York or Chicago. Novosibirsk, Khabarovsk, Irkutsk, Anadyr—all are now as familiar as Yonkers or Evanston. But the treat among them is the town of Flat, Alaska. Other towns have been said to be flat since the industrial depression but Alaska's Flat seems to be the authentically baptized municipality. The post-war territorial settlements brought into our ken the glamorous island of Yap, and now Wiley Post has added the incomparable town of Flat. A marvelous world we live in!

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Gentlemen Prefer Profits

THE difficulties of building a planned economy on foundations of individualism, competition, and the acquisitive instincts are emerging day by day to create dismay in the hearts of the officials who have undertaken the herculean job. Gentlemen, it seems, prefer profits—even to general recovery. They were, it is true, promised profits, but the Administration expected these to follow, not precede, the reemployment of labor and the raising of purchasing power. Since inflation was destined to cut the buying power of the dollar and prices were certain to rise, it was considered arithmetically self-evident that people would have to be paid proportionately more dollars to enable them to buy even the little they had been buying—let alone increasing their purchases sufficiently to create prosperity. All this was told to the industrialists of the country by the President, and the National Recovery Act was passed for the single announced purpose of putting men and women to work at wages that would buy enough things to return—eventually—a profit to the concerns which made and distributed them. Most of the industrialists seemed to understand this simple equation. They said: "Sure, we want to employ more men and we know wages must go up and we'll be tickled to death if President Roosevelt will make everybody obey the same rules—pay the same wages and work their help the same hours. And it's a good idea for the government to spend $3,300,000,000 on public works, especially if the contracts go to private business."

And so, swiftly and inevitably, confidence increased and bred widespread activity. The stock market started its spectacular climb. Production mounted. Each day produced a crop of optimistic news reports of men reemployed and factories reopened; wage increases were reported. And prices began to rise. From June 10 to July 8 wholesale commodity prices rose 5 per cent. In June they had increased 3½ per cent, showing, for the first time since 1929, an increase over the corresponding month of the previous year. Dun's index number for July 1, 1933, was 19.04 per cent above the level of July 1, 1932.

But meanwhile another by-product of optimism began to be evident. Industry, now convalescent, lost much of its former willingness to submit to the vigorous treatment prescribed and administered under government control. Several great industries submitted codes promptly, and one, the cotton-textile code, was accepted. But others hung back, meanwhile piling up production at existing low costs in expectation of orders at higher prices later on. Undoubtedly most of these industries counted upon the effects of the recovery act—the higher wages and wider employment—to provide those orders. But as individuals, again fairly rugged, they were determined to gain what advantage they could by delaying their own higher costs and cashing in as handsomely as possible on the increased purchasing power to be created by industry as a whole. This may seem reprehensible, but business is business. Let him who still hopes for the social regeneration of the capitalist system cast the first stone!

As a matter of fact it has already been cast. The crisis created by rising prices and increased production and the delay in submitting satisfactory codes has become so acute that every member of the Administration concerned with the recovery program has taken a shot at the offenders against the plan. President Roosevelt, Secretary Perkins, Recovery Administrator Johnson, Mr. McGrady, all have made statements attacking the saboteurs of recovery. Mr. Johnson described the present situation as "appalling" and asserted that he had seen advance wholesale quotations for retail restocking which showed price increases "from 60 to 130 per cent." In a similar tone of warning, Frances Perkins referred to the dangers involved in the "speculative race to produce as much as possible before wages and hours are fixed by the industrial codes." The result of this alarm was a blanket emergency code recently announced—an agreement to be entered into by individual employers and the President to bridge the gap between the perilous present and the ultimate acceptance of detailed codes in each industry. The "voluntary agreement" is to be put over by high-pressure publicity methods based upon a nationwide patriotic appeal.

So this is where we stand at the present moment. In order to induce American industry to preserve its existence and the system under which it operates, the Government of the United States must embark upon a national drive. Minute men must rush around from Rotary Club to Chamber of Commerce dinning into the ears of business men the patriotic duty of saving their own skins. And why is this preposterous nonsense necessary? Because the exuberance of a few months of increased activity, largely speculative, has induced so many industrialists to sabotage the recovery program that the program itself is in imminent danger of collapsing into ruins and carrying with it the gains of the last few weeks and the hope of future improvement.

We believe that Roosevelt, Perkins, Johnson, Ickes, Richberg, Wolman, indeed most of the leading figures in the recovery campaign, are honest in their desire not only to save but to stabilize industry. But each day gives to our rulers valuable if expensive lessons in social and economic realities. Business will not voluntarily cooperate; each industry, each concern will grab whatever advantage it can get without regard for the whole. Labor will receive the least industry can possibly pay no matter what this does to general "purchasing power." Cooperation will work only if it is enforced by the government. A patriotic appeal may be effective as long as the emergency is acute and business is worried, but an industrial system cannot run on patriotism. Already we have seen a vast government machine created for the purpose of instructing, cajoling, and exhorting our capitalist economy to stay alive. Even a few weeks' operation is enough to convince us that it will be able to succeed only through the exercise of force. That force is the beginning of fascism seems clear. The only possible alternative would be straight socialization. For the government to take over and operate for the benefit of the people the steel and coal and oil and other great industries would be almost as simple as to act as a combination of policeman and wet nurse. And we are convinced that it would provide the only road to an effective economic plan.

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Silver as a Beggar

FEW commodities have had such persistent champions for their welfare in Congress as silver. The success of the efforts of these champions is all the more remarkable when one considers the comparatively few persons in the United States who are directly interested in the price of silver. Yet again and again the propagandists have compelled the United States Government to buy more silver—usually much above the market price—than it had any need for. The Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890 had a rise in the price of silver practically as its sole object. The Pittman Silver Purchase Act guaranteed $1 an ounce for silver, which immediately broke to 63 cents an ounce when the act expired in 1923. More recently, the silver interests through their representatives in Congress succeeded in getting the government to accept silver in payment of war debts at a price of 50 cents an ounce. As silver at the time was selling in the neighborhood of 30 cents an ounce, this was either a left-handed way of canceling part of the foreign debt to us, or a left-handed way of forcing the government to buy large and undetermined amounts of silver at a price far above the market.

For some reason Senator Pittman, the chief political representative of the silver interests, was appointed by the President as one of the American delegates to the World Economic Conference; and during his time there he devoted himself single-mindedly to one sole object—to "get something for silver." He concentrated on two chief proposals. One of these was to retain the gold standard, but to use silver in place of gold for 25 per cent of the metallic reserves in the central banks. Assuming that currency would then be redeemed either in a fixed weight of gold, or in silver at the market price in terms of the currency, the effect of this plan would merely be to compel all the central banks to become speculators in 25 per cent of their reserves. If silver rose in price the banks would make a profit; if it fell in price they would suffer a loss. There is no reason why central banks should be subject to such uncertainties, and very good reasons why they should not. It is doubtful whether such a plan would really economize the use of gold. Moreover, if, as is generally expected, both the dollar and the "sterling bloc" of currencies are eventually to be devaluated—that is, if the dollar, pound, and other currencies are to be made redeemable in a smaller amount of gold than formerly—devaluation in itself seems likely to economize the use of gold sufficiently.

Senator Pittman's other chief proposal at the conference was that the gold nations agree to use a higher silver content than formerly in their subsidiary coinage; he ended by compromising on a resolution, which was accepted by the subcommittee to which the matter had been referred, to the effect that the various gold-standard countries should not "debase" their silver coinage more than they already had.

But what Senator Pittman gained from the conference as such was unimportant beside an agreement which he negotiated among the three leading silver-holding and the five chief silver-producing nations of the world in the course of his stay in London, according to which sales of the metal will be restricted for four years and its use will be increased. India agrees to limit its sales during the four-year period to 140,000,000 ounces and Spain to 20,000,000 ounces, while China will discontinue the sale of silver entirely. Meanwhile the leading silver-producing countries—the United States, Canada, Mexico, Peru, and Australia—agree to buy 140,000,000 ounces during the four-year period, of which amount the United States is expected to absorb about three-fourths, or some 24,000,000 ounces yearly. Of course, Congress may refuse to ratify the agreement, but such a refusal is unlikely. If the scheme is accepted, it means that at fifty cents an ounce—and it is predicted that the price will go higher—the United States Treasury will buy $12,000,000 worth of silver annually from American mines for four years.

The silver propagandists contend, of course, that an advance in the price of silver is imperative in the interests of general recovery. Their chief argument in this respect is that the fall in the price of silver from the 1929 level has correspondingly reduced the purchasing power of the Far East, particularly of China, and that only a restoration in the price of silver can restore this purchasing power. This argument, in so far as it is sincere, is fallacious. The purchasing power of the Far East consists not of silver but of its total exports. It is with silk, beans, eggs, tea, and a hundred other commodities that China pays for her imports, and only to a very negligible extent with silver. In fact in 1932 we *exported* to China nearly $9,000,000 worth of silver and received only $600,000 worth from there. The drop in silver has merely the effect on foreign trade that a depreciation in currency has elsewhere, except that Chinese internal prices adjust themselves more slowly than prices elsewhere. It is important, of course, to keep the price of silver as stable as possible, but this is something radically different from the adoption of artificial measures designed to make it as high as possible.

Dr. Fish

THE practical jokers in New York City who have long been accustomed to beguile their friends into calling the Battery on April Fool's Day in order to ask for a mythical Dr. Fish were righter than they knew, for during the weeks just past the keepers there have been besieged with citizens imploring to be allowed to dip their hands into a new sort of holy water sanctified by having been lived in by tropical fish. We hasten to add, however, that the movement is not religious and that it has nothing to do with the fact that the fish is the earliest Christian symbol. It is all because it was discovered, quite by accident, that one of the attendants at the Aquarium was mysteriously cured of a stubborn skin disease and that doctors were inclined to attribute the cure to the presence in fishy water of what biologists call bacteriophages.

It may even be that there is something in the whole fantastic story; stranger accidents have happened before in the history of medical science. Quinidine, which has a mysterious action in regularizing the heart, was discovered when a cardiac case was mysteriously improved after an attack of malaria had been cured by quinine. Doctors now regularly treat gangrenous wounds with maggots because it was found during the war that wounds so infested were generally almost free from gangrene; and the whole of the new fever treat-

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ment for tertiary syphilis grew out of the chance observation that paresis was strikingly rare in a certain region of the Near East where syphilis and malaria were both very common.

There is another interesting fact which the newspaper accounts of the incident have overlooked—namely, that amateur breeders of tropical fish have long believed that old aquarium water had some mysterious virtue. It is a common custom for them to preserve such water carefully and to transfer it from tank to tank in the belief that fishes put into "new" water were more likely to be the victims of disease. The more logical among them were inclined to treat the tradition as an old wives' tale but for once, at least, the old wives' tale very probably embodied a real truth. The same bacteriophages which cured the attendant at the New York Aquarium protected the fish from infection.

No one, of course, knows what a bacteriophage is. It is too small to be seen by the most powerful microscopes, and it passes freely through filters which catch even bacteria. It is, as a matter of fact, merely the name of something whose existence is assumed in order to account for an effect, but so, for that matter, are the atom and the electron. No one knows, even, whether a bacteriophage is living or non-living, for it seems to behave in some ways like a living organism and in some ways like one of those highly complex but non-living substances known as enzymes. Perhaps it is not really either. Perhaps, as some biologists have suggested, it is the link between the two. Perhaps then, Dr. Fish of April Fool's Day fame will help to answer the biggest question of biology, "What is life?"

The Fetish of Economy

THE NATION has received a number of letters in regard to its stand against the discharge of employees by the federal government in the interest of so-called economy. In what we have written we have tried to point out, first, that in a crisis when relief of unemployment is the biggest job facing the country it is folly for the Administration to discharge one worker in order to finance the employment of another and, second, that in effect the policy represents a destructive inroad upon the non-partisan civil service and the creation of jobs outside of it to be filled as political patronage. We have received no correspondence in disagreement with our second contention, and we believe that criticism of the first is due to certain misapprehensions about employment under the government as compared with work in what we miscall "private industry." One correspondent writes that our policy would "keep on the pay roll a lot of Republicans who are so many parasites." Another reader says:

> I am much out of sympathy with your plea for retaining all workers in government service. Also, it seems reasonable to me to dismiss government employees and then to create work for them elsewhere. The present is the only possible moment for putting into effect the much needed reduction in the number of government jobs. Workers in temporary conservation camps or in receipt of a small maintenance allowance will be absorbed in other fields; workers in government offices are *never* absorbed in anything else.

A good many years ago when nearly all federal appointments were frankly party spoils, the government services were not unjustly held in amused contempt as shining examples of waste and inefficiency. That attitude has survived partly by tradition but also through selfish modern propaganda, in spite of the fact that today all but an insignificant number of the federal employees are enrolled in the non-partisan civil service. The exceptions are departmental executives at the top and a few hangers-on at the bottom. Although many persons now in the civil service owe their appointment in some degree to political favor, most of them have since been glad to refrain from party activities—according to the requirements of the civil-service law—and have become public servants in a true sense. By and large they are faithful and far from overpaid workers. It is notorious that in the many fine technical and scientific services of the government compensation is far inferior to that paid outside. Although there are, and doubtless always will be, instances of waste and folly in the federal services, we think that by and large they are filling an incontestably useful social function and that, unlike some municipal organizations, they are not overmanned. The propaganda to the contrary which has been insidiously circulated in recent years comes from a comparatively small group of privileged and large-property-holding persons who are opposing the socially desirable effort to increase taxes upon incomes, profits, and other wealth in the higher reaches.

Clamor against taxes should never be allowed to obscure the fact that the employees of so-called private industry are just as really supported by the public, indirectly, as are those in government service directly. At their worst we know of no government wastes so glaring as the excessive compensation paid by American business in recent years to banking and utility officials, insurance heads, and industrial executives —often for hoodwinking or swindling the public—not to speak of the incredible sums dissipated in selling, promotion, advertising, and "service."

We do not oppose reductions in the personnel of certain services of the government, provided the employees are transferred to other work, nor do we condemn the recent cut in pay of 15 per cent or compulsory furloughs to a reasonable extent. We do insist that the place to begin unemployment relief is at home, and that it is ridiculous for the Administration to open one window for hiring unemployed while at another it is discharging its own employees. We think that the fetish of economy has led to some befuddled policy in Washington. A period of acute unemployment enforces economy on most individuals, but demands liberal expenditures by the federal government, which has the power to finance itself by loans and taxation.

One of our readers, quoted above, makes what appears to be a point of some validity in the contention that workers in temporary services will eventually be absorbed in other fields but that those in government offices never will be. But that position assumes that the country is destined one day to resume the working hours of 1929. Our own belief is that shorter hours are, and ought to be, here to stay, and that in consequence the national government will have to follow its advice to other business to shorten the working week and increase the number of workers. In the near future, therefore, it will need more workers to do an equivalent amount of work than are required at present.

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Issues and Men

The Damage to America in London

"A CATASTROPHE amounting to a world tragedy"—this is what Franklin D. Roosevelt said the failure of the London Economic Conference would be. Ramsay MacDonald said: "The fate of generations may well depend upon the courage, sincerity, and width of view which we are to show during the next few weeks . . . We must not fail." And Cordell Hull declared: "If, which God forbid, any nation should obstruct and wreck this great conference with the shortsighted notion that some of its favored interests might temporarily profit while thus indefinitely delaying aid for the distressed in every country, that nation will merit the execration of mankind." Even the King declared in his opening address that he could not believe that human beings were unable to solve the problems before them. But the failure is there patent to all men. This effort to find solutions for the capitalist world's misery has failed so completely that Moscow must be overcome with amusement. The peoples who read the declarations that I have cited above are justified now in expecting the prophesied disasters to begin.

The responsibility for this rests primarily upon the United States. It is now perfectly plain that the alleged preparation for the conference in the preliminary conversations in Washington amounted to precisely nothing. There was none of the preliminary spade work essential to the success of a conference unless, as at the Washington Conference for the Limitation of Armaments, one nation is ready to offer a concrete proposal for immediate action. In my judgment the fate of the conference was sealed when Cordell Hull not only muffed the opportunity offered to him by MacDonald to open the conference for business, but failed to produce concrete American proposals when he finally uttered the commonplace generalities that made up the bulk of his speech. If America had nothing definite to offer, who could have? I shall never understand why Franklin Roosevelt sent a delegation to London without a program, a policy, or definite instructions, a delegation headed by a low-tariff man whose associates were high-tariff men, apparently trusting to luck that they could do something and then changing his mind as to what he wanted them to do.

This has resulted in the final blow to American prestige in Europe. This is the real catastrophe for us, this and the fact that numerous superficial Americans are now saying, "Well we are glad we have fallen out with those damned, word-breaking welchers. We don't want to play with them and we don't care what they think of us—not in the least." Well, let me explain how rational and naturally pro-American Europeans, and especially Englishmen, feel about us. They are completely bewildered by our constant changes of front, reversals of opinion, and failure to live up to our agreements. They say: "With the best will in the world, dear Americans, we don't know how to do business with you. There was Norman Davis. He made a speech which was everywhere hailed as epoch-making. It seemed to us a complete reversal of your isolationist policy and a promise to stand with us in examining the question of guilt if another war should come and to throw your strength against the aggressor. No sooner was the ink dry upon our exclamations of joy than other interpretations of the speech were given which whittled it down to a point where it seemed to mean nothing. Then Mr. Roosevelt demanded that the World Economic Conference agree upon 'a fixed measure of exchange values . . . and we believe that these must be gold.' Soon after the conference met to carry out his behest he denounced it in vituperative language for seeking to do the very thing he asked of it! Then let us remind you that you took part in the making of the Treaty of Versailles; that you failed to ratify it and failed to enter the League of Nations which your own President created. How can we negotiate with you on any subject and feel that you mean what you say?"

I can only answer this by hanging my head. Of course, I explain that I didn't want the Treaty of Versailles ratified, and that I believe in Congressional control of the executive's acts, feeling that that alone has saved us from many a blunder and from having absolute dictators in the White House in foreign affairs. But this doesn't answer my European friends.

As for our American isolationists who rejoice that we made fools of ourselves and acted abroad like flighty, unreliable boors, I can only admit that their school is probably in the saddle now; that when Congress meets again we shall find ourselves in the midst of a terrific demand that we let Europe go to hell in its own stupid way, and much boasting that we can get on without the rest of the world. To which I reply, as I have many times before, that we *can* go it alone and bid the world go hang, but that if we do so we can never hope to recover even the normal prosperity of ante-World War days. Curious how some minds work! The other day I dined with a former American diplomat who, despite the failure in London, was surer than ever that we were on our way to an Anglo-American entente. He warmly defended our plan to build up the navy on the ground that sooner or later the united American and British fleets will impose peace upon the world. I pointed out to him that our announcement of this plan had already produced dispatches from Japan announcing great alarm there and a determined demand by their naval jingoes for a bigger program, and that the present distrust and loss of faith in us in England were being exploited by the big navy men there, and have put back prospects of an Anglo-American entente for many years.

All of which brings up the question anew whether capitalist society can possibly save itself from utter chaos. For the first time I have come back from Europe—my seventh trip since the war—to admit a sense of almost complete hopelessness. If some trick of nature itself does not get us out of our economic mess, how can our leaders possibly rescue us? Certainly the London Conference dealt a deadly blow to the world's progress and international cooperation.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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Roosevelt Turns Left

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, July 22

THE Roosevelt Administration is swinging toward the left. By this I mean primarily that the progressive elements represented by Secretaries Ickes, Perkins, and Wallace are steadily gaining influence at the White House at the expense of the reactionary and partisan elements personified by Budget Director Douglas and Postmaster-General "Genial Jim" Farley. That conclusion is supported by several events, foremost among them the President's choice of Secretary Ickes to administer the huge $3,300,000,000 public-works program. It had a double significance. Ickes had headed a faction which demanded that the entire program be launched with the least possible delay, while Douglas was spokesman for those who contended that prosperity was already returning, and that expenditure of the entire sum was unnecessary and wasteful. The view of Ickes prevailed. In the second place, the spending of such a sum obviously offered opportunities for graft, patronage, and favoritism on an enormous scale. It is reported that the agents of a dozen big Tammany contractors had been hanging around for weeks, with greedy eyes and watering mouths. They received their answer in Ickes's announcement that "there is no inside track to a contract." His thirty years' record as a foe of graft and spoils in Chicago is sufficient assurance that he means precisely what he says, even to those who do not know him. It is a terrible disappointment to the "deserving" ones. As if to dispel any doubt that his ideas were in complete accord with those of his administrator, Mr. Roosevelt made a point of telling reporters that, in considering applications for public-works loans, the Administration would be particularly disposed to finance the construction of municipally owned utilities, such as power plants and water works. Of the money advanced, 30 per cent will be outright gifts; the remaining 70 per cent will bear only 4 per cent interest, and may be repaid out of earnings. A sad, sad day for the power trust!

* * * * *

IF the National Recovery Administration maintains its present rate of speed, we may be living under a new economic order by August 1. The application of a blanket code, although euphemistically called a "voluntary agreement," not only will be undertaken with all the moral force of a Presidential command, but it will be supported by a campaign designed to arouse mass opinion to wartime fervor. All plans have been made for nationwide radio appeals, campaign posters, public speeches, and other devices employed in the Liberty Loan drives—not a few of which revive unpleasant memories. That the adventure is a perilous one is obvious, but this writer is convinced that there is no alternative except complete abandonment of the attempt to restore order and prosperity in industry. A continuation of the rising price curve, unaccompanied by any rise in purchasing power adequate to support it, could only end in a disastrous collapse of prices and a devastating curtailment of production. Indeed, it has already resulted in a minor collapse of stock and commodity prices. Furthermore, it will take months to work out codes for individual industries, and it is manifestly unfair to require some industries to conform to the codes approved for them while others indulge in an orgy of speculative production at depression wages and hours. Indeed, it is a question whether industry can survive half law-abiding and half anarchist. The Administration's problem has been intensely aggravated by the attitude of certain large industries, notably steel, which, having learned nothing from the depression, have seen in the invitation to submit codes merely a chance to seize new spoils and recover old ones. Only an industry dominated by the traditions of Frick, Gary, and Morgan would perceive in the present situation an opportunity to obtain government sanction for company unions, reinstatement of the outlawed "Pittsburgh plus" system, and a ban against devices reducing production costs. You can't reason with a hog.

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MOST of the criticism of the Recovery Administration has impressed me as being incredibly petty and mean. The critics are somewhat in the position of saying: "Produce the millennium on this spot at two-thirty o'clock tomorrow afternoon, or off goes your head." I have never been accused of lacking a critical temperament, but when I see men and women of unimpeachable sincerity working eighteen to twenty hours a day in a desperate effort to save all our economic lives, I cannot stand off and snipe. It is a curious fact that much of this nagging has come from so-called liberals and "friends of labor," although liberals and labor are in the saddle at recovery headquarters to a degree that would have seemed impossible and even preposterous three months ago. I venture to say that I am as well informed concerning what goes on inside that administration as any observer on the ground, and I do not hesitate to declare that its policies up to the present have been overwhelmingly influenced by the views of Donald Richberg, Alexander Sachs, Edward McGrady, Leo Wolman, and Frances Perkins. If liberals and labor cannot trust them, who the devil can they trust? Something of the same sort might also be said of the criticisms of the Roosevelt Administration at large. Here, as if in answer to the liberals' prayer, we are confronted with a program which represents, in very large part, the hopes, aspirations, and labors of such men as Justice Brandeis; Senators Norris, Wagner, and La Follette; Joseph B. Eastman, Harold Ickes, Frances Perkins, and Henry Wallace—by an Administration which, when it was unable to obtain Felix Frankfurter's personal services, accepted his recommendations in filling nearly half a dozen of the most important legal posts in the government. And still some of the liberals aren't satisfied. What do they want?

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I would be one of the last to assert that there is nothing to criticize in the Administration's policies. The situation produced by the "economy" movement, for example, is little short of a national disgrace. In the case of the Re-

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covery Administration we have the government recruiting some of the finest brains in the country, and saying in effect to them: "The $100,000-a-year men who have been running the nation's industry have finally succeeded in running it into the ditch. We want you to get it out of the ditch, repaired and in running order within sixty days—and a grateful government will pay you $6,000 a year for doing it." If these men are sufficiently gifted to rescue American industry, they are entitled to decent rewards. To ask them to do it at great personal sacrifice is a painful travesty. Consider, moreover, the ludicrous position in which the Administration places itself when it urges employers of all kinds to raise wages and increase employment, while at the same time it sets the contrary example by cutting wages and dismissing workers! What could be more absurd than the miserly attempt to save a few paltry thousands a year by wrecking the staff of a great scientific institution, the Bureau of Standards, whose researches have saved millions a year for industry? The whole tragic farce is a hangover from the panicky days when Ogden Mills and a majority of the newspapers were clamoring for "a balanced budget"—as if a really balanced budget were possible in such times as these! What is needed is not so much a balanced budget as a balanced outlook.

SECRETARY WALLACE'S announcement that cotton planters had signed contracts to reduce production by 3,500,000 bales was a distinct surprise to those who had not appreciated the magnitude of the campaign waged by the Department of Agriculture—and who, perhaps, did not realize the extremes of desperation to which the cotton farmers had been driven. Reduced acreage, coupled with higher production costs in the cotton textile mills, is bound to be reflected in increased prices of finished products. But there are genuine reasons for believing that they have been too low—and if the general recovery program succeeds, we shall be better able to pay them. Limiting production may seem a strange way of increasing wealth, but the fact remains that no other immediate and practical method has been advanced for improving the condition of one of the most distressed classes of Americans. So long as that huge surplus hung over the market, the planter was compelled to take what he could get for his crop. It may be argued that a general leveling of tariffs and stabilization of currencies would provide a market for our export cotton, but recent events at London would seem to demonstrate that that is not a neat little chore to be completed by ten o'clock tomorrow, and even a cotton planter can wait only so long to eat.

Six Months of Hitlerism

By HARRISON BROWN

THE day following Hitler's accession to power a famous paper, the *Commercial and Shipping Gazette* of Gotenburg, struck a note which was soon to be echoed in the editorials of the civilized press throughout the world. "Such a regime cannot last indefinitely," said the Swedish paper, "but every day is a day too long. Hitler's appointment as chancellor of our great neighbor is an insult to Europe." This contemptuous reference was the first Nazi rebuff; Göring issued an official protest, and seemed naively bewildered that Europe should find such indignation comical on the part of a professional defamer of other nations. Six months have now passed and the temporary insult has become recognized as a permanent menace. At the end of June, Philipp Scheidemann, first Chancellor of the German Republic, wrote in the New York *Times* that "Hitler's Berlin is an incendiary torch with which criminals and a group of mentally deranged are playing around a powder keg." A week later the Nazi authorities, in order to cover themselves for the arrest of the popular former Bavarian Minister of the Interior, Dr. Fritz Schweyer, announced that Schweyer had been guilty of treason. The treason consisted in stating in a private letter to his late colleague, the former prime minister of Bavaria, that "no trace has been left of rights and justice, of law and order. Divine and human rights are being trodden under foot, and degenerates profess to be the moral regenerators of the German people, while in reality they have merely imposed their will on fellow humans by force, and, like wild animals, have satisfied their egotistical instincts." The Nazis undoubtedly owe most to their ruthless employment of force and terrorism, but ruse also played a part in the early days.

Adolf Hitler has set more than one precedent. The most remarkable of them must certainly be that he has persuaded a great people to vote away its freedom. The path of history is dotted with tyrannies, and seizures of power have been common in most periods, but never before has a nation enjoying full right of free speech thrown out its arms to a tyrant and voluntarily riveted the chains about its own neck. This in itself constitutes the most striking proof of the pathological condition of Germany today. It does more, of course; the elections of March 5 were at once a tribute to the superb technique of Hitler's demagogy and a reflection upon the political intelligence of the German people.

No single explanation of this phenomenon can suffice; the reasons for the success of the National Socialist movement are, like its origins, to be found in a medley of complex political, psychological, and economic factors. But Hitler's life itself provides one interesting sidelight. The most talked-about man in the world has come to Bismarck's chair weighed down with seven hundred leaden pages of autobiography. Rarely indeed can one aspiring to leadership so blatantly have dubbed himself an ignorant barbarian. There is scarcely a page in all that turgid mass of undigested history and personal self-revelation which cannot today be quoted against him with deadly effect, all the more in that the book is still advertised as the bible of the babies of the movement. One significant passage in the early part of the book seems curiously to have escaped attention, however. Hitler is in Vienna seeking work as a house-painter. There he has his first contact with Social Democracy, albeit "nicht sehr erfreulich." He would not, he says, have bothered with his colleagues had they not worried him to join their trade union. Solidarity with the proletariat? The idea shocked him. "My clothes were still decently in order, my speech distinguished, and my

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temperament—reserved." He refused indignantly and had to quit the job, hence the birth of his anti-Marxist complex. And hence also the chief secret of his later appeal, for what Hitler felt in Vienna before the war the whole German middle class was feeling after the inflation.

The situation was quite different from that superficial snobbishness which prevails among the Anglo-Saxon middle classes, whose proletarianization might conceivably break down the barriers between themselves and the working class. In Germany the middle classes still treasured the legacy of Frederick the Great. While they were servile to the traditional ruling class they had their own place in society and were jealous of it. The enormous body of civil servants, poor in cash but rich in caste, were paid for their devotion to the state in the coinage of social prestige. When Poincaré and the Rhineland industrialists, led by Hugo Stinnes and Alfred Hugenberg, robbed them of their few material possessions and drove hundreds through starvation to suicide, the ghastly process left a residue of stupid, narrow, fiercely patriotic but resentful people. A new poor in a new sense. It was in this pool of trouble that Hitler fished and from the sons of those petty bourgeois that he formed the bulk of his storm troops.

The ferocity of the new hates in Germany must be seen to be believed. Those who have seen it will find nothing astonishing in the fact that young men from relatively sheltered middle-class homes should have become such a menace to public order that Brüning dissolved their organizations and forbade them to wear uniforms. Their later development was even more shocking, but the fact that the storm troopers have earned a universal reputation for unmitigated blackguardism is due chiefly to the character of their leaders, who deliberately made the Terror an organic part of the system.

Knowing their hold on their following to be based upon emotion and ignorance, the Nazi leaders came eventually to forbid their men to attempt argument with the left. A typical incident which fell under my own observation is worth citing. Two Communists standing at a street corner in a south German city some time ago fell into conversation with a group of Nazis in uniform. A lively but quite peaceable discussion developed until a Nazi officer driving by stopped his car and ordered his men to disperse. They refused to do so, whereupon the officer drove to the nearest *Schupo* and informed him that an "illegal gathering" was taking place at the next street corner, and thus had the men moved on. The S. A. troops not only specialized in individual murder, they consistently avoided fighting when they were not themselves in a majority. It is a literal fact that in four years' close observation of the National Socialist movement I can recall no single incident when they accepted battle at even odds. Hitler's "age of heroism" is a yellow age; the Nazis are brave only under police protection, as in all their provocation parades through working-class districts. Whatever fascism may be politically, it is certainly no breeder of heroes; the fascist heroes are rapers of women, torturers of prisoners, and murderers of the unarmed. The Nazis actually gave a state funeral in a Berlin cathedral to a man named Maikowski who was proved a common murderer!

During one of last year's elections a poster flared from the walls of Germany which depicted a relief map of the country dotted with black crosses. Across it was written the succinct title, "Hitler's Dritte Reich." During the past six months the press of the entire world has borne witness to the terrible truth of that prophecy. Writing over three months ago, the Berlin correspondent of the London *Times* stated that "what has been happening recently amounts to a diluted St. Bartholomew's Night massacre." Crimes have been committed whose very magnitude stifle protest because the civilized mind is stunned into incredulity. It was weeks before the atrocities of the Brown Terror became known to the outside world, simply because the editors of responsible papers abroad could not believe that even their picked reporters were not being misinformed or carried away by their own emotions. It must be categorically stated that even today there is no conception of the barbarism which has prevailed and which *still continues*. Still more difficult is it to visualize what life is destined to be for the millions of Germans who are too civilized and too intelligent ever to adapt themselves to the madness of the National Socialist state. We have had admissions recently, by Nazi leaders, of excesses which they strenuously denied while they were instigating them. Some of the torture houses have been closed, notably the one in the Friedrichstrasse, Berlin, where even the Nazi neighbors complained of their night's rest being disturbed by the perpetual screams of the victims. The system of hostages is still freely used and the mouths of victims, of refugees, and others are sealed by the knowledge that if they give an account of their sufferings to the foreign press the same treatment will be meted out to their relatives. After the middle of March, orders went forth that beatings were not to be administered in public. The gangsters, now baptized "auxiliary police," were to "arrest" their victims and do their bloody work under cover. Thus the very exposure of their deeds was twisted by the Nazis into another weapon for the fomentation of anti-foreign sentiment.

In similar fashion the lines of people waiting to inform against personal enemies, or against those whose jobs were coveted, ceased to be conspicuous. Spying is now organized, and a secret police system has been established which caused a private correspondent to write recently that "Italy and Russia are free countries compared with Germany today." Nevertheless the censorship is so complete and the penalties for talking so severe that those not in contact with Jewish or left circles are today easily convinced that the "excesses" have ceased. The extent to which censorship and rumor combined can distort opinion is comically shown by a letter recently received in London from a lady in a small German town. After expressing her indignation at the "abominable atrocity lies," the writer went on seriously to write that "the French are said to have reoccupied Mainz and we hear that no German's life is safe in London"!

Some foreign observers imagine that "things will settle down" and that the Nazis will adopt the veneer of civilization. This opinion is not shared by those best acquainted with the mentality of the men in command. Two forms of their barbarism at least can admit of no change within their dogma, whatever smoke screen expediency may cause to be emitted. Neither anti-Semitism nor the persecution of the liberals can be relaxed. The former by no means comprises the whole story of Nazi atrocities but it most glaringly exposes the hollow emotionalism of the regime, since it is based on that meanest and most contemptible form of human weakness, racial prejudice.

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Space does not permit of any exhaustive examination of the Jewish persecution but some idea of its extent may be gathered from extracts from the new anti-Jewish laws. The ruling which is to be applied in the "purging" of the entire Civil Service reads as follows:

> 1. A person shall be known as a non-Aryan who has non-Aryan, in particular Jewish, grandparents. It suffices if one parent or grandparent is a non-Aryan. This is especially to be taken for granted if one parent or grandparent has belonged to the Jewish religion.
>
> 2. In case of doubt as to Aryan origin a certificate must be procured from an expert in racial research at the Ministry of the Interior.

The Reich law appertaining to the disbarment or refusal of admission of non-Aryans to the legal profession reads:

> 1. Admission to the bar of lawyers who are of non-Aryan extraction according to the law for the purging of the Civil Service of April 7, 1933, can be rescinded until September 30, 1933.
>
> 2. Admission to the bar may be denied to persons who, according to the law of April 7, 1933, are of non-Aryan extraction even if there are no grounds for exclusion according to the code of disbarment.
>
> 3. The administrator of justice may issue a prohibition to plead against a lawyer, such prohibition to be effective until the decision has been made as to whether authorization for revocation according to paragraphs 1 or 3 will be issued.

If these laws were rescinded today the effect would be slight, for anti-Semitism has been deeply sown and furiously cultivated in the minds of millions, ineradicably no doubt in the minds of children. But there is no sign that they will be rescinded. On the contrary, as Nazi incompetence becomes more manifest and as their economic and other difficulties increase and cause dissension, it seems inevitable that the leaders will increase their efforts to divert the disappointment of their following into anti-Jewish channels.

The Brown Terror goes on at all times. Whole districts are terrorized and men and women speak only in frightened whispers of the victims in their midst. Hundreds have been killed, thousands more have been injured, many of them permanently, especially about the eyes and the genital organs, while the number of robberies accompanied by violence defy all computation. Neither women nor the sick nor old people are safe from the savages. In a village in Hessen some weeks ago a Jew who was ill in bed was made to get up and walk through the street calling "Heil, Hitler." He asked to be allowed to do it when he had recovered; he offered money, which was taken; but he was forced out then and there. At the end of the street he was beaten until he fainted. Later he was picked up by neighbors and taken home to die. An acquaintance of my own met an old friend just home after three weeks' "preventive arrest." Questions elicited nothing, but later, when quite alone with his friend, he opened his shirt and showed his body covered with deep scars. Another acquaintance was fetched from his bed in a Berlin suburb at night and pushed into a large sack, which was bound around with wire netting. He was beaten until he ceased to move and was then taken to a hospital and left there. The next day the gangsters called to take him away for further treatment, but the doctors nobly lied and declared he had died in the night.

The favorite weapon has been the "steel wand," a rubber ball on a spring at the end of a steel rod which is capable of inflicting terrible injuries without actually or immediately causing death. Recently the Austrian *Allgemeine Zeitung* published a protest against the continued brutality of the storm troops which is alleged to have been made to Hitler by the Nazi leader, Graf von Reventlow. "The typical procedure is for trade-union officials, including women, to be dragged to Nazi headquarters and there beaten and otherwise ill-treated, *often in a way that cannot be described.*" The Count might have added that this is only the first part of the "typical procedure." After one or two such trips the victim is usually wrecked enough to be induced to sign a "confession." Only then is he turned over to the police and charged with some form of treason, and for the purpose of conviction the "confession" is admitted in court as a legal document. In such circumstances as these it is not surprising that even the reactionary *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung,* before it was taught obedience by a term of suppression, should have written that "in wide circles the panic terror has spread."

The whole truth will never be known, for no later summary can do justice to a system of terror extending over a whole country. Nor can anything excuse it. The Brown Terror is not only the worst of such outbreaks which have occurred in Europe, it is also the meanest. The Nazis have never been persecuted. On the contrary, the many criminals among them have been far too leniently dealt with. It is notorious that the scales of justice in Germany have for years been weighted in favor of nationalist reaction. There was no Communist or other "danger"—the suggestion has been laughed out of court by every qualified foreign observer in the country. The Terror has been inaugurated as a means of disposing of the opposition, as a substitute for constructive measures of which the party leaders are incapable, and because it fits the barbaric natures of those leaders. The appalling case of Frau Jankowski who was severely beaten has been widely reported. This woman had devoted her entire life to social service in a Berlin suburb. When questioned about the outrage, the Nazi envoy to Scandinavia, Herr Alexander Bogs, coolly remarked, "if ever a Socialist or Communist deserved such a hiding, then it was Frau Jankowski."

For the first time in history in time of peace a government has imprisoned numbers of its own nationals on no other grounds than that their opinions are objectionable. It does not seem to be generally recognized that at least 30,000 men are today doing forced labor in concentration camps. They range from ex-governors of provinces to workmen. Not a great deal is known about the administration of these camps, but that life in them is neither pleasant nor safe is indicated by the number of those reported "shot in flight." In most cases, of course, this is just a euphemism for the cold-blooded murder of a prisoner. The governor of one camp, when he was interviewed by an English newspaperman, cynically remarked that he was pestered by the wives and other relatives of the prisoners asking permission to see them, "permission which is of course always refused on principle." Those who naively imagine that Hitler's professions of desire for peace are to be taken seriously should consider the official statement issued at the end of April in regard to these camps. Not only is the radio, the press, and every organ affecting

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public opinion entirely devoted to chauvinistic and war propaganda but, according to this statement, those above all "who took a leading part in pacifist associations" are to be permanently incarcerated.

It is a horrifying fact that Germany is today ruled by men of a type such as have never before governed a great nation: drug addicts and murderers, thieves, forgers, and moral decadents. These are not mere random terms of abuse; they describe the commonly recognized character of most of the chief leaders of the movement. The academic life of the nation has been destroyed. The magnificent civil service, which has ever been the backbone of Germany, has been wrecked; today its offices are filled with men whose only qualification is that they are infatuated devotees of the Nazi cause. Small wonder that a distinguished German should have remarked recently, "If these criminals disappeared tonight, they would have been found to have done irreparable damage." And meantime letter after letter received from Germany bears the heart-broken words, "What will history say of our generation?"

It is the effect of the regime abroad, however, which seems likely to alter the course of Europe. With intensive fomentation of the war spirit being openly conducted among the youth, with "incidents" occurring on every frontier, and with the cardinal points of the recent conference of Nazi leaders before their eyes, it is obvious that Germany's neighbors will not indefinitely remain "patient." The second of the professed aims of the Third Reich, as discussed at the leaders' conference, was "the cutting of every international tie whatsoever." In that at least Hitler is succeeding even better than he knows. One can only hope that the very rapidity of his success in this field may yet destroy him and that, by the removal of this abortion of government, Germany may be saved from annihilation.

Whooping Up Muscle Shoals

By STETSON CLARK

KILOWATTS have been shamelessly going to waste over the spillways of the great Wilson Dam at Muscle Shoals. But not word-power. The word plants are operating even if the nitrate plants are not. Indeed, now that Roosevelt's Tennessee Valley development and reclamation project is swinging into action, they are humming. The transmission lines are built, too, for disseminating the product. Every scrap of it is being utilized—to promote Muscle Shoals real estate.

The golden button that first started the Muscle Shoals word plants was touched in 1922 by Henry Ford, and Thomas Edison played a part in their dedication. When Ford was thinking of buying Muscle Shoals, he visited the development accompanied by Edison. Standing on the approach to the Wilson Dam, Ford and Edison are reported to have engaged in the following conversation:

"What do you see?" said Ford to Edison.

"I see more wealth than all the minted coins of the world. What do you see?" replied Edison.

"I see," replied Ford in turn, "a city seventy-five miles long. I will put a million men at work."

And what a vision that offered to the land-boom boys!

For this great metropolis that he envisaged Ford offered to Congress in 1922 a down payment of $5,000,000 in cash. This offer he withdrew in 1924. Moreover, he has in part disclaimed his quoted statements regarding the potential industrial possibilities of Muscle Shoals and has frowned upon their use in promotion literature. But not even Ford can stop a real-estate salesman from talking, once he is started. If anyone doubts it, let him get in touch with one of the organizations selling lots at Muscle Shoals. A horde of these came into existence like mushrooms after the Ford pronouncement, and a number still have headquarters in New York, Chicago, Detroit, and many other large cities. Each time Congress has considered utilizing the hydroelectric-power development they have exhibited renewed activity. The biggest boom came in 1925 and 1926. At that time streets were laid out—or, to be accurate, turf was scraped off between subdivision sidewalks—over an area surrounding the dam and nitrate plants sufficient to accommodate a population of 500,000. Then taxes lapsed; grass grew again between the subdivision sidewalks.

But on May 10 of this year the New York *Sun* printed a special dispatch from Muscle Shoals which began as follows: "The boom times that the Muscle Shoals area has long awaited are now definitely in process of development. . . ." Similar dispatches appeared in other papers. So the turf is again being scraped off between the sidewalks; the back taxes are being paid. Business in the phantom city of Muscle Shoals looks up. Real estate has already jumped 100 per cent in value, according to the dispatches. Would you like to know more about it? On Broadway in New York in a store window you will see a fascinating replica of Muscle Shoals—unless it has recently been removed—a great contour map of the area, with a model of the dam, the nitrate plants, and all the other developments; there is even a toy railroad train chugging round. Inside you will find a chap lecturing.

Nature, this lecturer informs you, in her wisdom and bounty assembled more valuable and useful materials in the Tennessee Valley than in any other region of like size on earth. His exact words are: "All minerals except copper, gold, and silver; all woods useful for building except mahogany and teak." And though you may have supposed that the greatest American deposits of bauxite, the ore from which aluminum is derived, were in Arkansas, this lecturer informs you that in fact the second largest deposits in the world are just west of the Wilson Dam. That is where Arkansas is, of course, but he doesn't expect his listeners to know enough geography to check up on him. His figures about coal and iron appear to include the Birmingham district, but he does not bother to mention that fact.

Would you like to see a real action picture, a motion picture, of Muscle Shoals? That is possible at the Muscle Shoals auditorium, just a few doors farther down the street. It is operated by the same organization. Here you can listen more comfortably sitting down. And while the movies show

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what a beehive of activity Muscle Shoals is—rock, asphalt operations, limestone quarries, coal mines, blast furnaces—leaving the audience to judge for itself of the nearness and importance of each to Muscle Shoals—the lecturer at the auditorium reinforces the general appeal of Muscle Shoals with a few statistics on the possible real-estate developments of the region.

Now, by the way, are you not beginning to think that you would like to ask a rather personal question? The lecturer suspects that you would. Let him phrase it for you. Isn't it this? "Where, how, and when do I fit in? How do I profit from this wonderful Muscle Shoals development?" As answer to your query let him draw a comparison between Muscle Shoals and Gary. One could buy land in Gary for $40 an acre before the United States Steel Corporation decided to locate its plant there. Now property in the business district is worth $3,000 a front foot. What brought about this change? Why, the United States Steel Corporation put 20,000 men to work there. Roosevelt is going to put 200,000 men to work in the Tennessee Valley. Does your question need any answer beyond that? The lecturer neglects to inform you that very few of the 200,000 men are likely to be employed at the Wilson Dam, where his subdivisions are laid out.

Would you like still more assurance how you are to profit from all this? The lecturer continues. The very power generated at Muscle Shoals implies the coming of a great industrial population. He quotes Ford to the effect that in industrial developments each unit of horse-power provides employment for a man. Already Muscle Shoals is equipped to generate 200,000 horse-power. Eventually it will develop 750,000 or 1,000,000. Every industrial worker supports four in addition to himself. Draw your own conclusions.

This is the ballyhoo. Part of it. To get results in sales of twenty-by-one-hundred-foot building lots at, say, from $450 to $7,000 apiece, it is of course necessary to have an audience of the right sort. The store demonstration is one means of securing such an audience. Salesmen at this open-to-the-public demonstration judiciously distribute tickets for the auditorium event—or, rather, take the names and addresses of those who would like them. The tickets are sent by mail. Another way in which audiences for Muscle Shoals lectures are secured in New York is through the distribution of postcards with detachable return tabs on them to passers-by in the more prosperous office-building districts, such as the region around the Grand Central terminal. On the return tab, above the place where one is supposed to fill in one's name and address, is printed: "I can save $10 or more per month and I am sufficiently interested in Muscle Shoals to ask you to send me complete information."

Both the return postcard and the store demonstration are drag-net methods of securing prospects, better designed for quantity than quality of haul. More selective in its results is the old and tested plan of circularizing mailing lists of people of assured income with no special knowledge of investment, such as dentists, school teachers, and physicians, or, better still, "sucker lists" of those who are known to have taken similar bait in the past. Another device for securing prospects, worthy, perhaps, of special mention, is known as the "bird-dog" method. According to the New York Better Business Bureau, which has had cause to take a special interest in the Muscle Shoals promotion, the bird-dog plan is especially effective in flushing the quarry in times like these. For the benefit of the reader unfamiliar with sporting technique it may be well to explain that a bird dog points, and the hunter performs the execution. The following incident will illustrate.

A man and his wife were listening to one of the more popular radio programs, and being slow to turn it off at its conclusion, heard and became interested in an unfamiliar program following on the same station. It was about Muscle Shoals. At its conclusion the broadcaster offered—what do you think?—a job! Part-time work, not selling, something that anyone of ordinary education and intelligence could do, connected with the great government project at Muscle Shoals. Those interested were instructed to report at a given address the following day at three in the afternoon. This man had been out of work for nearly a year. Decidedly he was interested. He reported. He was received at one of those Muscle Shoals lectures that have been described. For an hour and a half ninety-seven unemployed white-collar workers, mostly men but with a considerable sprinkling of women, listened to a dissertation on Muscle Shoals. They were not told the nature of the work, but they were given this clue as to how they might qualify for it. No undesirables of the know-it-all or smart-Alec type were wanted—only men and women of character and intelligence, capable of *doing as they were told,* need trouble to return. Such persons and only such were to report again at the same time on the following afternoon. Eighty of the ninety-seven did so. They listened to another lecture on the same subject, and were treated to a free motion picture. Still they were not told the nature of the work. But they were informed that by their presence they had demonstrated that they were the type of men and women desired. They were as good as hired, every one of them. They had demonstrated their good faith. On the following day they would be told the nature of the work. And they were.

All the eighty reported. The nature of the work for which they had been engaged was divulged. It was this: Each person was to interest every friend and relative who might be in a position to invest in Muscle Shoals real estate. All he had to do was to induce his friends and relatives to come to the lectures and free motion-picture exhibitions. As had been promised, no selling effort whatever would be called for; the organization's own selling force would attend to that part of it. For each friend or relative who bought a lot the—shall we say?—bird dog would receive twenty-five dollars.

Thus by one means or another the "investment" possibilities of Muscle Shoals are brought to the most likely hearthsides in the land. Golden words make it appear that the whole project is to be consummated in the midst of the sidewalk-crisscrossed subdivisions—"Highland Park," "Ford City," "Nitrate City," "Millionaire Lake," and "Eldorado"—that have been laid out in the vicinity of the Wilson Dam. The sober facts are that the Congress has appropriated $50,000,000 for the completion of the Cove Creek dam, for putting into experimental operation the nitrate plants, and for further utilization of the Wilson Dam hydroelectric development. It is expected that construction gangs will soon commence work at the site of the Cove Creek dam, which is upstream 180 miles. A lesser number of workmen will be

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required for constructing power lines, installing additional equipment, and overhauling the existing nitrate plants at Muscle Shoals. In 1926 United States Army engineers estimated that not more than 2,000 men would be employed if both of the government's nitrate plants were put into operation. To operate the dam and power house when all the proposed units are installed, about 100 men will be required. Dwelling-houses built by the government in the reservations surrounding the nitrate plants provide quarters for the skilled and executive personnel. According to present plans, practically all the power generated at Muscle Shoals in excess of that required for operating the nitrate plants will be transmitted to important and developed industrial centers nearby, such as Nashville, Chattanooga, Memphis, and Birmingham.

These are the essential facts of the Muscle Shoals development. The essential nature of the Muscle Shoals real-estate promotion, on the other hand, was indicated when in 1923 the New York Better Business Bureau haled one of the more enterprising promotion organizations into court. Court evidence revealed that the plaintiff in the case paid $6,000 in cash toward a total purchase price of $24,000 for an eighty-acre tract of bottom land near the government's nitrate plants; that $30,000 was expended in laying out sidewalks and grading streets; that promotion and selling expenses brought the entire investment to $150,000; and that the property, laid out in building lots, was for sale for $600,000. Most of it had in fact been sold—on an instalment basis. The contracts stipulated a 25 per cent down payment, 6 per cent interest on the unpaid balance, and a five-dollar-a-year charge for up-keep on each lot. Incidentally, the magistrate (since that time, as a result of the Seabury investigation, he has been deposed) found in favor of the defendant.

One item included in the $120,000 for promotion and other expenses was the cost of free excursions from New York provided for purchasers and prospective purchasers of lots. Similar excursions were sent out from Chicago, Detroit, and other points. But here was the catch. Unless the prospective purchaser—the majority on these excursions were in this class—bought a lot, he paid the cost of the junket himself—approximately $100 a person. If he did make a purchase, the promotion item of $120,000 took care of it. With the great government nitrate plants as exhibit number one, not to mention residential streets which sight-seeing buses might be routed through in the nearby thriving communities of Florence, Tuscumbia, and Sheffield, not many prospective purchasers on these excursions had to pay their own expenses. They merely paid for a building lot or two several times the cost of the excursion.

Walter Lippmann
IV. On Democracy

By AMOS PINCHOT

On much that Mr. Lippmann has to say of American life, our limits of space forbid comment. Fairly or unfairly, I have chosen for discussion in this article passages from his writings which bear mainly upon inflation, foreign debts, Congressional investigations, and democratic government. Here, needless to say, one is not concerned with Mr. Lippmann as a stylist or literary personage. One is concerned with what he is telling his readers.

It is unjust, I think, to criticize Mr. Lippmann for what his former associates refer to as his swing to the right. I do not find that his books and articles confirm the existence of any real drift toward conservatism. On the contrary, whatever his youthful opinions may have been in the remote days when he founded the Harvard Socialist Club in company with John Reed, his writings show that, despite his employment of the vocabulary and certain clichés of liberalism, he has been a conservative on major questions for the last twenty years. It is true that now and then, on moonlight nights, and especially during general elections, his conservatism may philander a little with liberalism, possibly by way of showing that it is neither prudish nor narrow-minded. But it violates few of the proprieties, and invariably returns to its own chaste bed by midnight. And in any case, if Mr. Lippmann had frankly swung away from liberalism, that would be no one's business but his own.

In 1931, when Mr. Lippmann joined the staff of the conservative *Herald Tribune,* many feared that as a liberal he would find himself in a difficult position. One doubts that this has been the case. Indeed, one is inclined to believe that, but for occasional disagreements on the question of supporting candidates, Mr. Lippmann and Mr. Ogden Reid find few large issues which they cannot discuss harmoniously. On important policies, Mr. Lippmann is rarely ahead of his time. And as a good pragmatist, who avoids being right at the wrong moment, his opinion is generally the postscript of the least illiberal group in Wall Street.

Lately, Mr. Lippmann has been criticized for his reversals of opinion on inflation. On this score too I think he should be exonerated. For it is the duty of a publicist to abandon any position he has taken the moment he is convinced he is wrong, provided, however—and here I think is where Mr. Lippmann is at fault—he makes no pretenses, and lets his readers know exactly where he stands.

Obviously, the question of currency inflation is one that admits of sincere difference of opinion. It may be argued, for instance, that inflation is, in essence, repudiation of debt and a legalized means of robbing the creditor for the debtor's sake. On the other hand, it may be said that the tendency in modern industrial society is to concentrate wealth in the hands of a comparatively small class, and that when this concentration reaches a point where the purchasing power of the masses is seriously impaired, inflation must be resorted to as a means of moving wealth, i. e. purchasing power, back to the pockets of the people.

However that may be, it was on January 18, 1933, that, after stating that "the Huey Longs" and other Democrats were misrepresenting the attitude of the Roosevelt Administration by conveying the impression that it favored

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currency inflation, Mr. Lippmann wrote in his column, Today and Tomorrow:

> . . . Mr. Roosevelt proposed in an orderly way to adjust those debts which required adjustment and maintain all obligations, public and private, which it is possible to maintain. The inflationists propose to strike at the currency itself, to debase it deliberately. . . . The inflationist method would propose to relieve not only the farmer who has a mortgage but the public-utility company which has bonds outstanding, to reduce the value not only of money owing on real-estate mortgages, but all money—money in savings banks, money in insurance policies, money in governmental bonds, money owing for salaries, for wages, for every kind of fixed obligation.
>
> Mr. Roosevelt ran and was elected after a campaign in which he made it entirely clear that he proposed to deal with the debt problem by detailed and specific adjustments. To suppose that he has secretly scrapped these pledges, and is now following Huey Long, is to believe that there is no honor left in our public life.

And this was not a new position for Mr. Lippmann. For he had been writing eloquently against currency inflation since the previous autumn. By March, 1933, however, we find a change in Mr. Lippmann's attitude. And though he does not swing clear over to the Huey Longs, he nevertheless edges toward them by stating in Today and Tomorrow that "the reopening of the banks will require *a willingness* to expand the currency adequately." (Italics mine). On the following day, March 8, he marks time, so to speak in his progress toward inflationism, by speaking kindly of "dilution" of the currency, provided, however, our government arrests the inflationary process, "before it gets out of hand."

On April 19, J. P. Morgan hallowed with his blessing the relinquishment of the gold standard. In the meantime, conditions had gone from bad to worse, and it was rumored that the big banks of New York and other debtor interests were fast coming to the conclusion that it was better to be paid in smaller dollars than to have the debtors go broke and not be paid at all. On April 25, after a series of wobblings in which he expressed his preference for inflation by open-market bond purchases and warned the country that, in any event, the government should assure "the banks and private investors that the integrity of the dollar is to be maintained," Mr. Lippmann becomes a currency inflationist by approving the section of the law that gives the President power "to fix the weight of the gold dollar." More than that, he states that the possession of such power is "an accepted part of central banking practice and monetary management."

In the interim, on April 24, Mr. Vincent Sheean, a newspaper correspondent, had written a letter to the *Herald Tribune,* in which he quoted from Mr. Lippmann's thoroughgoing denunciation of currency inflation of October, 1932. He charged Mr. Lippmann with inconsistency, and begged for an explanation of his change of mind. Mr. Lippmann's article, referred to by Mr. Sheean, reads in part as follows:

> It is here that Senator Borah comes forward with a demand for an expansion of the currency, and it is here that he has fallen, I think, into a dangerous error. . . . For these reasons it may truthfully be said that an inflation of the currency would make the burden of debtors, of farmers, and producers of all kinds, worse than it is today; that it would not assist, but would actually defeat, that effort to cause a rise in prices which Senator Borah and every other understanding person desires. It is no paradox but the simple truth to say that a serious attempt to inflate the currency would aggravate violently the deflation of prices.

On April 27, refusing to be taken in inconsistency, Mr. Lippmann annihilates Mr. Sheean in a letter to the *Herald Tribune.* He denies that he has either changed his mind or been inconsistent. He makes no claim to infallibility or immutability, yet it so happens, he says, that in this particular case he has been consistent as well as right.

> The only difference between what I now advocate and what I have been advocating for more than a year is that it no longer seems to me possible to make the policy successful within the limits of the gold standard. Since last April I have had increasing doubts as to whether it was possible "to make good on a gold basis the existing capital structure" (April 29, 1932), but I have never felt that it was honorable to abandon the gold standard except under compulsion. That compulsion came at the end of February, when the banks were closed and specie payments had to be suspended.
>
> In making this reply to Mr. Sheean I do not wish to pretend that in all matters, or even in all aspects of this one matter, my articles have been consistent and unchanging. I have often changed my opinions, sometimes because they appeared later to be wrong, sometimes because I have lived and learned, and sometimes, as in the case of the gold standard, because events themselves had changed.
>
> It is not important, but it just happens that I am not guilty of the particular inconsistency which Mr. Sheean mentions.

In other words, with a fatherly tolerance toward the dissenter, which might be hard to match in recent controversial exchanges, he gives Mr. Sheean to understand that it is not he, Mr. Lippmann, that has changed; it is the course of events. Clearly, Mr. Lippmann's views have remained unaltered, since they have retained a fixed position in relation to truth, history, and the universe in which Mr. Lippmann has his home. And somehow, the conclusion is conveyed that Mr. Sheean has been guilty of a rather shabby trick. However, irrespective of the merits of the case, which are plainly on Mr. Sheean's side, one's feeling is that Mr. Sheean deserves scant sympathy. He should have known in advance that an effort to corner Mr. Lippmann on any subject whatever is like trying to corner Jove himself. Evading the issue, our publicist wraps himself in a cloud, like an offended deity, and, having blasted Mr. Sheean with his lightning, vanishes in the sky.

Coming to Mr. Lippmann's attitude on the payment of war debts, we must admit that our inconstant nymph of journalism has shown a more than ordinary degree of consistency. Yet he avoids being uncomfortably consistent. For, as he told Mr. Sheean—Mr. Lippmann lives and learns. On November 16, 1932, he wrote in Today and Tomorrow:

> The policy of cancelation can be dismissed quickly. The American nation will not offer it and none of the important debtors will ask for it. The fundamental objection to cancelation, now that the debt contracts exist, is that it would impair treaty obligations in a world which depends for its security and its prosperity upon treaties.

(Alas, poor world!) More than once, Mr. Lippmann assures us that he is not for cancelation; he is for revision. Yet, when we turn hopefully to his previous issue of July 15

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for a definition of revision, our curiosity is not rewarded. For we find that, to all intents and purposes, revision is cancelation, since he urges wiping out—not canceling, be it known—the entire debt of the fifteen debtor nations, upon their payment to this country of a sum equal to 9 per cent of their total indebtedness. Nevertheless, on January 16, 1933, he replies indignantly to a correspondent who rates him as a cancelationist, that the statement that he is a cancelationist is "an astonishing misrepresentation" and "flatly untrue."

Apparently, in Mr. Lippmann's mind, cancelation of a mere 91 per cent of the debts has not only the virtue of not being cancelation, but the even greater one of preserving those solemn documents which sustain the world. One would like to ask just where, between a 91 and a 100 per cent revision, Mr. Lippmann finds the point where revision becomes cancelation and treaties tremble in their boots?

Plainly, cancelation, like inflation, is a debatable issue. But, irrespective of the spot where expediency and justice meet, it would seem incumbent on a responsible publicist to state his case candidly, and with some regard for his own government. Yet, at a time when the spokesmen and press of the debtor nations, plus a considerable part of our own newspapers, supported by an army of militant bankers, Anglophiles, Francophiles, and the sort of fashionables who are wont to curry favor with foreigners by running down their own country, were united in a frantic effort to make the United States appear a usurious Shylock, squeezing the last penny from friendly peoples, Mr. Lippmann was more French than the French, more English than the English. He not only made no attempt to check this nonsense, but led it, to the delight of the foreign press, which picked up his writings and spread them far and wide as proof that the great liberal journalist of America was ashamed of his country's greed.

In Today and Tomorrow, Mr. Lippmann accused America of persuading France and England to go to Lausanne and cancel the German reparations in the innocent belief that America, through President Hoover, had pledged itself to reciprocate by postponing the interest payments. This despite the fact that Mr. Laval, to whom Mr. Hoover made whatever representations were made, was far too shrewd a politician not to know that Mr. Hoover had no power to bind Congress to any course whatever.

On most occasions Mr. Lippmann is a restrained writer. He wins his readers by the suave temperance of his style. But he arraigns the Americans who balk at cancelation in a big bow-wow style—something of which he is very rarely guilty—and with an intemperance which he reserves for no other group of malefactors. They are political terrorists, wavers of the bloody shirt, makers of discord. He writes as though they felt for the debtor nations an insane hatred, like that of the Northern irreconcilables for the South after the Civil War. After citing the generosity of England and France at Lausanne, and their changed attitude toward Germany, he writes in his column of July 15, 1932:

> What they have learned we shall learn. The moment will come when men will say to themselves here that the war which began eighteen years ago must end, and that it is time to stop waving the bloody shirt, that it is time to deal as Lincoln would have dealt, with his kind and patient strength, and to retire into the obscurity which would be their worst and sufficient punishment all that brood who inherit the implacable hatred and evil genius of Thaddeus Stevens. We have had enough of the political terrorists who, appealing to all that is base in our natures, have brought the politicians to a point so abject they dare not call their souls their own. Let the exploiters of hatred and the makers of discord get out of our way. They have hurt and humiliated us long enough. We have other business to do. For this people will not forever allow its interests to be perverted, its policy to be distracted, its reputation to be lowered, its honor impugned, its magnanimity and greatness denied by the scratching and wailing of jingoes and ignoramuses.

But if Mr. Lippmann is impassioned on the question of cancelation, we find him hardly less so on the subject of democracy. But before examining him on democracy, let us cite briefly a few facts which seem germane to its discussion. The history of government may be regarded as the story of the conflict between two theories—the democratic theory and that opposing theory which upholds the massing of power in the hands of a comparatively small group. History abundantly proves that human beings are not fitted for the possession of great power, and that those whom the gods would make mad they first make powerful. It took thousands of years for civilized peoples to realize that concentration of power means abuse of power; and that, for all its drawbacks, democracy, in the long run and except in grave emergencies, is the most workable form of social control. This conclusion is perhaps the most important one that has been reached by any considerable portion of the human race.

Unfortunately, however, it is not an unassailable conclusion. And from time to time, especially in the crises which occur in the aftermath of war, democracy must endure a new and painful *via crucis*. Its reputed friends turn against it. Its enemies redouble their attack. Distrust of the people and exaltation of executive power are breathed with the air. And this has been so throughout history. In Greece, before the Peloponnesian war, democracy seemed established. It held the loyalty of the Athenian people, and stirred their imagination. "But a people ruling—" says a speaker in Herodotus, "first, the very name is beautiful—Isonomie (Equality in Law)." Yet, as Gilbert Murray recalls, it was but two decades later that an Athenian statesman voiced the opinion of a changed world. "Of course," said he, "all sensible men know what democracy is. . . . There is nothing new to be said about acknowledged insanity."

In "Public Opinion," 1922, and "The Phantom Public," 1925, Mr. Lippmann sets forth his views on democracy. While he does not tell us in so many words that democracy should be abandoned in favor of some sort of fascist regime, this is the unspoken conclusion. As usual, Mr. Lippmann airs his talent for not saying the thing he implies. But he lists innumerable and apparently unsurmountable objections to democracy, and makes it sufficiently plain that, if there are still those who have faith in the democratic theory, they should be warned; for they are kneeling at the shrine of a dying god. Thus, though Mr. Lippmann refuses to slay his democracy outright, his assault upon it is like the Chinese torture of a thousand cuts. While no single gash inflicted by our writer is fatal in itself, the sum total leaves democracy little more than a bleeding stump.

Democracy, argues Mr. Lippmann, presupposes an in-

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finitude of impossibilities. It presupposes either a "self-sufficient individual" or "an Oversoul regulating everything." It presupposes an informed public and an organized public opinion, whereas, Mr. Lippmann reminds us, such a public opinion is a figment of the imagination. It presupposes familiarity not merely with issues but with men, which is impossible in a country like the United States, on account of the vast numbers of the electorate.

Jeffersonian democracy, says Mr. Lippmann, predicates "an ideal environment and a selected class," and though this did not conflict with the political science of the Jeffersonian era, "it did conflict with the realities." Democracy presupposes an informed Congress, whereas, says Mr. Lippmann; ". . . a congress of representatives is essentially a group of blind men in a vast, unknown world." Elaborating his point that the plight of Congress is due to its ignorance, he writes:

> So bad is the contact of legislators with necessary facts that they are forced to rely either on private tips or on that legalized atrocity, the Congressional investigation, where Congressmen, starved of their legitimate food for thought, go on a wild and feverish man-hunt, and do not stop at cannibalism.

Thus, as in his previous books, Mr. Lippmann pays his respects to Congressional investigations. And that he does so at this time is significant. For 1922, the year he wrote "Public Opinion" marked the beginning of a series of Congressional inquiries which were to bring out, more dramatically than ever, the character and practices of the big business administrators whom, in "Drift and Mastery," 1914, and "A Preface to Morals," 1929, Mr. Lippmann offers as the hope of the modern world. It was in 1922 that the Lockwood Committee made its investigation of the steel interests. It was in 1923 that Senator Robert M. La Follette published his report, showing that the Rockefeller group so dominated the oil industry through transportation differentials and unfair competition, that:

> Standard Oil today fixes the price which the producer of crude oil receives at the well, the price which the refiner receives for his gasoline and kerosene, as well as the retail price paid by the consumer.

In 1924, Senator Walsh of Montana investigated the oil seandals, which wound up in the conviction of Secretary Fall, the escape of Attorney-General Daugherty by means of a hung jury, and the disclosure that four of the enlightened administrators of the Standard Oil companies had, with Harry Sinclair, conspired to defraud their stockholders of $8,000,000. It was in 1926 that the Senate Committee on Campaign Expenditures surprised Insull in an attempt to buy for $125,000 a seat in the Senate for his friend, Colonel Smith, the Chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission. On the whole, Mr. Lippmann could hardly have found a worse moment to denounce Congressional inquiries.

Coming now to "The Phantom Public," a sequel to "Public Opinion," we find in Mr. Lippmann's assaults on democracy a bolder tone. At this time, 1925, notwithstanding the efforts of the liberals in Congress, plutocracy seemed more firmly intrenched than ever, while big business stood at the gates of that paradise of privilege whose tranquillity was only to be shattered by the crash of 1929. As Mr. Lippmann himself points out in "Men of Destiny" the country had become bored with scandals, and Coolidge had managed public opinion so adroitly that for "every yawp" he could "match a yawn." Democracy was at a low ebb when Mr. Lippmann wrote "The Phantom Public." And this may account for the unwonted vigor with which our publicist presses his attack.

The problems of democracy, says Mr. Lippmann, change so quickly that familiarity with them at any given time becomes useless a few years later. "That is why the usual appeal to education as the remedy for the incompetence of democracy is so barren." Democracy "has never developed an education for the public. . . . It has, in fact, aimed not at making good citizens but at making a mass of amateur executives." It produces "a bewildered public and a mass of insufficiently trained officials."

> The force of public opinion is partisan, spasmodic, simple-minded, and external. It needs for its direction, as I have tried to show in these chapters, a new intellectual method which shall provide it with its own usable canons of judgment.

But for a description of this method and these canons, the reader waits in vain. With the reticence of a college student guarding the mysteries of his senior society, Mr. Lippmann leaves the matter in darkness, and moves sternly on.

So much for a few of the many objections raised against democracy in "Public Opinion" and in the first two parts of "The Phantom Public." But it is in Part III of the latter book that, exchanging the role of critic for that of judge, he dons his robe and wig and arraigns democracy in the dock:

> A false ideal of democracy can lead only to disillusionment and to meddlesome tyranny. If democracy cannot direct affairs, then a philosophy which expects it to direct them will encourage the people to attempt the impossible; they will fail, but that will interfere outrageously with the productive liberties of the individual. The public must be put in its place, so that it may exercise its own powers, but no less and perhaps even more, so that each of us may live free of the trampling and the roar of a bewildered herd.

Whatever may be said of the foregoing as a confession of a social philosophy, it at least has the merit of candor. Had Mr. Lippmann written nothing else, this paragraph alone should go far toward making him immortal in the literature of politics. That some of Mr. Lippmann's objections to democracy are valid objections, no one will deny. The difficulty with his discussion, if it can be called a discussion, is not merely that he exaggerates and states unfairly the objections to democracy, but that he cites none of its advantages—and incidentally, none of the disadvantages inherent in other systems. And this an objective writer, dealing with a subject of importance, would hardly fail to do. That autocracy, fascism, plutocracy, and dictatorships of various descriptions have proved themselves shortsighted, ignorant, and uneducative, and, what is more, extremely selfish and cruel, is a truism which a fairer critic would cite by way of evening the account. To quote briefly from Henry Noel Brailsford, who summarizes the case for democracy far better than I can:

> We do not desire the rule of the majority because we cherish any illusion about the intelligence or the virtues of the masses. Like average men in all classes, they are content to have their thinking done for them by their leaders and their newspapers. We do not count brains in a

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> modern state; we count interests. The ballot is a rough method of deciding the greatest good of the greatest number. If the greatest number is muddle-headed in perceiving its greatest good, it must learn its lesson by hard experience.

And yet, Mr. Lippmann, whose writings, stripped of their stylistic excellence, often reveal surprising immaturity, repeats again and again what is so obviously untrue, to wit, that democracy presupposes that men are equal in character, intelligence, and wisdom, and, in "Men of Destiny," denies that democracy permits what he calls "an order of values among men."

Incredible as it may seem, for all Mr. Lippmann's awareness of the disparity between the bewildered herd and the unbewildered few, his writings carry little evidence that he is even dimly aware of the part privilege plays in accentuating the disparities of American life. And in particular he takes no account of the fact that the failures of democracy have not been due to defects inherent in democracy, but to our having permitted vast concentrations of wealth and power in the hands of a small privileged class, which in itself would go far toward wrecking any form of government conceived by the mind of man. Indeed, in his writings on the failure of democracy, he emphasizes almost everything but the one salient condition that is responsible for its impaired functioning.

Strangely enough, though Mr. Lippmann still classes himself as a liberal in his promotional pamphlet, he has had few kind words to say for the men who are fighting the battles of liberalism in Congress, that is, with the exception of Senator Borah. And yet it has been the devoted and, I think, on the whole intelligent efforts of such men as the older and younger La Follette, Norris, Costigan, La Guardia, Wheeler, Wagner, Cutting, Walsh, and Couzens, and of other liberals outside the federal government, that have saved American politics from surrender to a materialism as gross as any the modern world has known.

As anyone versed in politics knows, the liberals, irrespective of their political and economic tenets, are simply men who are too innately decent to sit by complacently while big business makes the government its silent partner in exploiting the inhabitants of the country. It is true that the liberals have not been able to unite upon a constructive program. But this should not stultify them in the eyes of Mr. Lippmann, who repeatedly boasts that he has no program himself.

> I have no legislative program to offer, no new institutions to propose. There are, I believe, immense confusions in the current theory of democracy which frustrate and pervert its action. I have attacked certain of the confusions with no conviction except that a false philosophy tends to stereotype thought against the lessons of experience. I do not know what the lessons will be when we have learned to think of public opinion as it is, and not of the fictitious power we have assumed it to be. It is enough if with Bentham we know that "the perplexity of ambiguous discourse . . . distracts and eludes the apprehension, stimulates and inflames the passions."

In this sad reflection upon the futility of his thinking which constitutes the final paragraph of "The Phanton Public," Mr. Lippmann garners the belated fruit of two reasonably fat volumes. Indeed, Mr. Lippmann keeps so far away from the formulation of a program that, if one were to try to find a principle other than the further massing of power in the hands of plutocracy, upon which he relies for social or political improvement, one would have to adopt the method of the astronomer who, by analyzing the rays from distant stars, establishes their physical composition.

For his attack on the democratic theory, some of Mr. Lippmann's admirers urge in extenuation that, his point of view being generally cynical, he should not be expected to make an exception by believing in democracy. This argument does not bear examination. For when he discusses the benefits which are to accrue from the cancelation of war debts, or from big business under its enlightened administrators, he speaks with the simple faith of a Tennessee fundamentalist bishop. In justice to Mr. Lippmann, however, it must be noted that lately, indeed very lately, his attitude toward democracy has undergone an alteration. I refer in particular to his address on May 20, 1933, to the Associated Harvard Clubs at Cleveland. By this time, democracy, considering the variety of his attacks upon it, should, by every rule of nature, be as dead as Julius Caesar. Nevertheless, the Democratic Party having lately won an overwhelming victory, and the White House, together with the executive and legislative branches of the government, being filled to the eaves with an unprecedented horde of Jeffersonians, Mr. Lippmann, as a matter of courtesy to the new incumbents, saves democracy at the very brink of the grave.

> We have heard quite enough of late about the glorious achievements of tyrannical governments and how freedom is an illusion and democracy a failure. The last word has not yet been said on the subject.

Admittedly Mr. Lippmann has done good things, things which others may cite in some discussion purporting, as this one does not, to catalogue his virtues. At times, the New York *World's* editorial page glowed with something more than literary style and intellectuality. But the glow was shortlived, and since then the bulk of his writings have been reactionary. Always the impulse to write humanly of men and affairs is quenched by an inveterate disbelief in the people. I imagine that Euripides's words,

> The simple nameless herd of humanity
> Hath deeds and faith that are truth enough for me!

would, in Mr. Lippmann's philosophy, seem crass sentimentalism. Yet they are nothing else than the poetic expression of the fact, proved by experience, that on questions of simple justice or broad policy, it is safer to trust the opinion of a ditch digger than that of a college president.

Mr. Lippmann has, I think, done an immense amount of harm. He has confused the thinking of his readers. He has confirmed them in unconscious Bourbonism. He has written persuasively against democracy, and persuasively for plutocracy, which, however, he has not described. He has soothed his readers to sleep where the public good required vigilance. He has advocated the leadership of big business as a wise, disinterested leadership. He has proclaimed his faith in monopoly. He has joined with plutocracy in its hue and cry against Congress and Congressional inquiries and has shared its distrust of the people. He has helped to put his country in a false position in the eyes of Europe. He has bemoaned the fact that there is in the United States "a dying down of the old popular fervor in attacking corruption."

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Yet he has supported Tammany for political reasons, and has had no word to say about the Insull debacle, in which the corruption of the utility companies culminated in an unprecedented disaster for the investing public. He has ignored the fact of privilege and diverted attention from the struggle between privilege and justice. He has told his readers what they want to be told, offering complacency instead of truth.

And it is regrettable. For Walter Lippmann, with his active mind, his great talent, his industry, and his brilliant style, might have been a rain that would have helped freshen the streams of American thought.

Hero Balbo

By GEORGE SELDES

ITALO BALBO, hero, aviator, member of the cabinet, original member of the quadrumvirate which "captured" Rome, and former political boss of Ferrara, has arrived with his squadron. In Montreal, Chicago, and New York, extraordinary precautions were taken to safeguard his life. In London, Brazil, and New York, shouts of "assassin" greeted him. Why?

Despite ten years of censorship in which the entire history of the violence and bloodshed which marked political disputes in Italy has been either erased or altered to read more sweetly, a few persons outside of Italy still remember Signor Balbo's record. In his early twenties, he joined Benito Mussolini in Milan and became associated with a little group of household friends who were pledged to carry out the future Duce's secret orders. Two other intimate friends and workers were Amerigo Dumini, born in St. Louis, the son of Augustus and Jessie Williams Dumini, and Cesare Rossi, an ex-Socialist. These two, tried for murder in 1926, were later imprisoned for blackmailing the Duce.

In 1922 Mussolini appointed Balbo with three others to lead the "March on Rome" while he himself waited in his barricaded office. In 1923 Mussolini rewarded Balbo by appointing him at the ripe age of twenty-five commander-in-chief of the militia. Balbo was also "Ras" or boss of the Province of Ferrara. It was in the village of Argenta in Balbo's own province that a Catholic priest, the Abbe Minzoni, organized a Catholic Boy Scouts and other Catholic clubs which opposed the bloodshed and terrorism of contending rival political parties. At this time Mussolini, who had not yet begun negotiations with the Vatican, still publicly declared himself an anti-clerical and atheist. The "squadristi" or racketeers were still instructed to fight the Catholic organizations. Balbo organized a squadristi punitive expedition which invaded Argenta and sacked the clubs. In the fighting Father Minzoni was killed. So indignant was all Italy that a trial was held in November, 1925, as a result of which Mussolini removed Balbo from power. One of the pieces of evidence I have seen, a letter dated August 31, 1923, and signed "Balbo," ordered the beating and deportation from the province of witnesses and political enemies who had been found not guilty in another affair.

But shortly after the murder of Father Minzoni by Balbo's squadron the demoted militia leader discovered a plot among the Fascisti to replace Mussolini with a monarchist leader. Mussolini rewarded Balbo by naming him under-secretary of national economy. Eventually, Balbo became minister of aviation. In 1926, preparatory to visiting Bologna, the Duce had 2,000 persons arrested there "preventatively." Nevertheless, someone in the line of parade fired a shot. Just behind Mussolini rode the official nobility. Buonaccorsi, one of the nobility in the front rank, slit the throat of the would-be assassin, another stabbed him several times, and as the quivering body was hanged Italo Balbo fired two shots into it. Rarely has history recorded a lynching in which the leading members of a government participated. This case caused tremendous excitement in Bologna, where the masses looked on while the nobility and the lawgivers delivered summary justice, but censorship suppressed almost all the facts for years.

A number of similar incidents of violence may be found in the secret history of this great hero. While millions cheer, a few remember.

In the Driftway

THE old ships pass. In the welter of other events several famous steamships have vanished from the transatlantic lanes in the present year almost without notice. Americans, of course, are brought up to look with indifference upon obsolescence—to regard it as a part of progress and therefore almost a blessing. The scrap pile is not a sacred burying ground in the churchyard but a showy mausoleum in the market place, which stands as a proof of our advancing civilization. But even Americans are not oblivious to the tragedy of age and discard when they overtake humanity or that almost human creation, a ship. So there will be those to feel a touch of melancholy at the thought that four such illustrious transatlantic liners as the Leviathan, the France, the Baltic, and the Adriatic should disappear from the scene all in the space of a few months.

* * * * *

PROBABLY the withdrawal from service of the Leviathan will not be greatly mourned. She is an American ship in name only, having been built in Germany and acquired by the United States as one of our spoils of war. She was gloriously useful in rushing over troops and getting them back again, but as a commercial passenger carrier in subsequent years the Leviathan was a failure. The France stands in a different position. For a number of years the France was the fastest ship on the North Atlantic with the exception of the Mauretania. Like the latter, the France had four funnels, or smokestacks, which gave her an appearance of tremendous power when under way. She was the last four-funnel steamship built by the French Line and is one of the few survivors of that distinguished type to live through to our day. No recently built ship can quite match those four-stackers in the impression which they make on the eye as majestic floating machines. They are demoded today because the change from coal to oil as fuel makes one funnel enough for practical purposes, although two or three smokestacks are usually installed for the sake of appearances and miscellaneous ventilation. It is worth recalling of this great ship that her name was simply France. She was never "La

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France." The French Line had had a long string of ships before her named La Provence, La Touraine, La Bretagne, and the like, but with a sentiment delightfully Gallic it was agreed that there could be but one "La France"—the fatherland.

* * * * *

THE disappearance of the Adriatic and the Baltic from the transatlantic lanes marks the end of a special type of passenger vessel and a kind of traffic that is now gone probably never to reappear. The Baltic was sold to Japanese buyers lately for scrap. The Adriatic is still in use for cruises out of England but presumably will not survive long. Both ships belonged to the celebrated group of broad-beamed, high carrying-capacity craft in which the White Star Line began to specialize early in the century when it definitely gave up the pursuit of speed in favor of comfort and large-scale accommodation. The Baltic had a speed of seventeen knots an hour. She was under 24,000 tons gross, no great size in this day, but she was built to carry 2,744 passengers and had three quarters of a million cubic feet of cargo space besides. The recently launched United States liner Washington, with virtually the same tonnage as the Baltic, has passenger accommodations for only about 1,200 persons, and the mammoth Normandie, now under construction in France, is designed to carry no more than 3,490 passengers, although she is three times as large as the old White Star steamship. In the Normandie, intended to be the world's fastest transatlantic liner, passenger accommodation has had to be sacrificed, of course, to make space for engines, boilers, and fuel. Also it is to be remembered that ships like the Baltic and Adriatic thrived on the once enormous immigrant traffic and gave more space to third-class passengers—packed exceedingly close—than do vessels nowadays. It is a reasonable guess that liners like the Baltic and Adriatic had accommodations for more passengers by comparison with their size than any ships before them ever had or any craft after them are likely to have. THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Tax-Free Cities Again

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

In your number of July 12, George W. Greene makes reference to my article on Tax-Free Cities and says: "The thesis so well set forth by Louis Bartlett in his article on Tax-Free Cities is unsound, it seems to me, and will hamper the future growth of municipal ownership."

He mistakenly assumes that because I have shown how cities *can* be made tax-free by using their profits from the operation of public utilities I am urging that they *should* do so. A rereading of the article will convince him that I am not urging this as a municipal policy.

In Ontario under the Hydro Commission, where there is no practical difficulty in finding new capital for additions and betterments to existing systems, it is possible to apply all of the profits from operation to a reduction of power rates. In the United States this is politically infeasible as the power companies during the last thirty years have made it extremely difficult for cities to obtain the necessary new capital except from the profits of their systems, and it is necessary to divide the savings under municipal ownership into at least two parts, one devoted to reduction in rates and the second to new capital investments in the plant. "Tax-free cities" have devoted a large part of all of these savings to a reduction in the tax rate. How these savings should be applied is a matter of policy which I think cannot be decided a priori. Many cities now find a reduction in the tax rate or a subsidy to the unemployed from power profits to be a life saver.

San Francisco, July 14 LOUIS BARTLETT

Revised Election Figures

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I wish to call your attention to the election statistics used by Mr. Hays in his article, La Guardia for Mayor of New York. These figures evidently were taken from the 1932 annual report of the Board of Elections in the City of New York. They are not the revised figures issued some time later, which are as follows:

John P. O'Brien, Democrat	1,054,323
Lewis H. Pounds, Republican	443,520
Morris Hillquit, Socialist	251,656
Joseph V. McKee	264,836

This includes 22,937 variations of McKee's name. Of the unrecorded votes there are approximately 206,000.

New York, July 20 DAVE LAZAR

Housing Is a Social Problem

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Some time ago in a review of current development in prefabricated housing, by Douglas Haskell, reference was made to the Allied Construction Industries Standardized House Conference (of which the writer is chairman) with the statement that "their research attempts to save the contractor's form of enterprise. Our organization aims to go beyond, not to save, antiquated building procedure in the most urgent social construction problem now before the nation. Your reviewer must have been erroneously informed.

Practically all mass-production housing schemes have been the products of individual architects or manufacturers of special materials. This accounts in the first case for certain clever space arrangements but serious failure to achieve structural and mechanical simplicity and economy. In the second case the irrational bias is easily discernible for metal, or wood, or brick, or enamel, or cotton, or glass which are utilized without reference to their essential characteristics.

Designs result which fail to permit variation of appearance, fire resistance, structural unity, and economy. These metal or wood or cotton houses will be discarded when it is remembered that the safe shelter of human beings is the object. The metal houses cannot stand a simple cost analysis. Aesthetically there are violent objections to an appearance resembling that of filling station toilets rather than houses. Virtually all neglect the fundamental fact that housing is already a social, not an individual problem and that construction must be applicable to large communal buildings as well as small houses.

The Allied Construction Industries House Conference is unique in that it has, for the first time, assembled all related professions in its work, including architecture, structural engineering, mechanical engineering, standardization and production engineering, city planning, financing and cooperative and governmental social organization.

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Without prejudice toward materials, utilizing their maximum possibilities by advanced structural design, providing extensive variation of appearance in form, texture, and color, requiring relatively simple fabricating apparatus, all economically controlled and adaptable for community development, results have been achieved which are not marked by the individual weaknesses here pointed out. Only through such a comprehensive organization can the problem be met.

Moscow, June 1 ZARA WITKIN

My Country 'Tis of Thee

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

America is the land of motion and emotion. By popular demand both must be cheap.

Baltimore, July 16 W. H. LOGUE, JR.

Inflated Books

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I wish to protest against a common habit of modern publishers. I refer to the practice of padding a very slight book (slight in total words, not necessarily in literary value) until the book appears large in size and, therefore, worth a considerable price. Several recent books have impressed me most unfavorably for that reason—for example, Katharine Anthony's "Marie Antoinette" and Hamilton Basso's "Beauregard."

But the worst example of physical inflation that I have seen is James Truslow Adams's biography of Henry Adams, a book which I intended to buy. I found a large, somewhat imposing volume, when viewed from the outside. Turning the leaves, I discovered also that the book had evidently been printed for the blind; the type was very large, the margins excessive, and the leaded spaces between the lines something to marvel at. Between two chapters were three pages that contained one line of print—not one line for each page, but one line in all. Evidently the publishers had decided that the text *must* run about 200 pages, and by clever manipulation they forced a short text to appear long.

It may be that such cleverness is in some degree responsible for the present plight of the publishers. This is no time to waste money, and most of us desire that 200 pages shall represent exactly that, and not the equivalent of 100 or 150 pages. I know that I, for one, shall not buy "Henry Adams," though I should like to own it; I refuse to pay $2.50 for a book that should sell at the most for $1.50. Any person who sees new books can name others that have been padded and over-priced in similar fashion.

I, for one, am tired of it. Personally, I prefer small books, if they are decently printed, for the housing of books, in this day, is no small problem in itself. When I do buy a large book, I want that book to justify its size and price in reading matter as well as in literary worth. This practice of padding books strikes me as similar to the business tactics that many of our clever bankers pursued until very recently. For the reader, such a practice rouses suspicion and restrains buying; for the publisher, it is not only questionable ethics, it is bad business.

EDD WINFIELD PARKS

Nashville, Tennessee, June 15

The article, The Random Satire of George S. Kaufman by Joseph Wood Krutch, announced for this issue, will appear next week.

What Is Happening to the Professions?

The depression has laid a heavy toll on professional workers. For many of them the outlook is desperate. How have they met the onslaught of hard times?

In the next issue *The Nation* will publish the first of a series of striking articles on the white collar worker and the depression. This one by Talbot Faulkner Hamlin deals with THE PLIGHT OF THE ARCHITECTS.

What has happened to the doctors, trained nurses, teachers in school and college, artists, clergymen, engineers and musicians will be set forth in subsequent articles.

Is the Home Loan Act a Fraud?

Also in next week's *Nation* Henry Goldey makes the startling assertion that:

"Debenture bonds of the Home Owners Loan Corporation are ineligible under State laws for investment by supervised financial institutions."

Therefore, "no relief under the bill can be expected by the vast majority of home owners of the country."

Professional workers will want to know what is happening in their own and other professions.

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Books and Films

Before the Storm

By C. DAY LEWIS

Now, in the hour of exhaustion,
When laburnums loll like tongues unslaked,
When mouths of prophets are dry and arable is cracked,
As though for the answer to the crucial question
Earth seems to wait:
The crisis of her heart betrayed
In the redder flush of tulips, a luster on all things laid.
We see our fate
Through her clairvoyant eyes,
And, as in crystal, near and dear,
Landmarks, old loves, features almost forgotten, appear.
But the air stirs with a faint surmise,
A hope of ease,
A sick man's sigh for water; and we know
Coming, is coming now
The flash, the thunder, the release.

Here, in the streets of desperation,
No beauty gives color to their hour of need;
Burnt out as an engine driven too hard, that seized,
Are the nerves of this nation:
Faces like dead ash fallen in,
Hearts their fires drawn,
Earth-fast eyes, cheated too often by false dawn.
Yet here, here shall storm begin,
And if he strikes your landmark, these will never miss it.
Already are beating faintly his drums
Below their hearts' horizon. Be sure, when he comes,
It is no flying visit:
Lightning is on his lips, power in his veins
That all who are wired to receive shall share;
They shall rise to find the air
Cleared, sunny with a fresh eloquence, as after rains.

A Confession of Faith

All Men Are Enemies. By Richard Aldington. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

MR. ALDINGTON calls his new book "a romance," and so it is in the sense that its core is a love story, frankly lyrical and unabashed. He would, however, be the last to deny that it is also a confession of faith, and I fancy that many readers are going to judge it largely according to the extent of their sympathy with that explicit faith.

This, so it seems, is the extrovert's decade. At the moment our typical heroes turn outward upon the world, not inward upon themselves, and their concern is with society, which must be made different from what it is before any personal happiness is possible. But in this one sense at least Mr. Aldington's hero is not typical. He is a product of his time and acutely aware of its problems; but he is, primarily, an individualist, and his story is the story of a successful effort to achieve a meaningful life in the midst of a world whose whole spirit is antagonistic to the aims he pursues and the values he cherishes.

The form of the book is the familiar life story of a young man, Antony Clarendon. Like one of Mr. Wells's heroes, he is born into the quiet English countryside, grows up under various intellectual influences, meets young Socialists and young worldlings, goes to war, and then emerges into a world where everything has been tested and most things destroyed. He differs from the Wellsian hero, however, in that the problems of society furnish only the background, not the substance, of his life. Faith in human institutions he has lost and, along with it, faith in most men as they now are. But the good things of life—love, peace, art, and beauty—are still good if only one can be wise enough or fortunate enough to find them, and the chief business of life is still to be sure that one does. The times are out of joint. The comfortable creed of the Tory is a fraud, and the equally comfortable faith of the utopian liberal who sees freedom slowly broadening down and "progress" automatically proceeding from triumph to triumph is no less a sham. But the danger is that those who revolt against that sham may forget what life is really for, that they may establish or try to establish an orderly and equitable world from which, nevertheless, the possibility of any rich or humanly valuable life has departed.

Accordingly, therefore, Antony rejects the efforts of a Communist acquaintance to bring him into the movement. He is even for a few days drawn unwillingly into the arms of "volunteer workers" organized to carry on during the period of the general strike, and drawn in just as he was into the great war—not because he believed in its aims but because there was no possible public attitude to which he could give a genuine allegiance. The revolutionists are as alien to him as the solid commercial citizens, for the simple reason that they are equally crass in their materialism, equally incapable of building a really good world because equally incapable of conceiving what such a good world would be. He is a lost soul in the midst of a lost society, but, unlike most of the others, he is still, he believes, at least a living one. He turns defiantly from the society he cannot save to that self which, perhaps, he can, and if a justification for that act is necessary he would find it by asserting that the individual can do nothing more useful than to keep alive the sense that the meaning of life lies in the experiences possible to it, and that, ultimately, it can be good only if the individual finds it so.

Mr. Aldington prefaces this quite long but swift, passionate, and eloquent novel with an "author's note," and with a sort of prologue in which the gods of Olympus discuss the fate of his hero. Neither is quite necessary, for one of the best things which can be said of the novel is just that its argument is kept so well in solution that it hardly needs any explicit statement. But the whole spirit of the thing is nevertheless tinged with what, if the word had not been so cheapened by misuse, one would like to call a pagan attitude, rather than either a Christian or a "modern" one. Mr. Aldington is no aesthete and no pessimist. Neither do his individualism and his introversion imply anything remotely resembling the exquisite but attenuated and finicky super-refinement of a Proust. Vigor, health, and a proper appreciation of the senses is the foundation of his philosophy and, for him, doing counts at least as much as contemplating can. The triumph of his hero comes when he is at last reunited with the woman from whom he has been separated, and love, rooted in the instincts of the flesh, is not merely a part but the symbol of life's meaning. But these are not the only things which suggest the pagan attitude, for even more fundamental is the whole assumption that success in life is something which must be wrung from a world whose tendency is against human happiness. We are always trying to conceive a society in which the good life would be universal and all but automatic. We resent, especially, the whole idea of a capricious fortune which gives opportunity to

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one man and denies it to another. But the Greeks took Fate for granted. They saw no reason why a man should utterly reject its favors just because they were favors, and, in a sense, Mr. Aldington makes his hero—who recognizes that his life, hard as it is, is nevertheless a favored life—take somewhat the same attitude.

I have no doubt, as I suggested before, that some readers will resent the whole implied philosophy of "All Men Are Enemies." I do not see, however, how any can deny the unusual interest of the narrative or the eloquent fervor with which it is written. Like his hero, Mr. Aldington may be a lost soul but he is still a living one.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

The Socrates of Plato

Socrates. By A. E. Taylor. D. Appleton and Company. $2.
The Socratic Problem. By Arthur Kenyon Rogers. Yale University Press. $2.

SOCRATES is at once a historical fact and a historical legend, the legend itself being possibly one of the most influential facts in the course of Western civilization. For Socrates awakened Plato, and Plato as well as Jesus and Paul went into the making of Christianity. For most cultivated general readers, the picture of Socrates is that given by Plato in the "Dialogues," and there is good enough reason, as these two authors substantially agree, for accepting the Platonic portrait in essence and in many details as a likeness at once striking and authoritative. The portrait is, of course, "idealized," that is to say, it was drawn by a disciple who was a genius and by a philosopher who was a poet. Whatever ancillary detail may be contributed by other contemporaries, there is general agreement among such scholars in Greek philosophy as Taylor and Burnet that the Platonic Socrates is probably nearest the Socrates who lived and breathed, and questioned poets, generals, and statesmen in Athens. It is certainly the Socrates who has become the symbol of philosophical rectitude, humorous integrity, and intellectual martyrdom. The Socrates who is one of the saints of the world's spiritual history is not the cautious moralist whom Xenophon insisted upon and apologized for, nor the amalgam of playboy physicist and psychical researcher (a mixture of Eddington and Oliver Lodge) whom Aristophanes ridicules, nor yet the scandal-touched figure of the gossiping Diogenes Laertius. It is the ugly and hypnotic friend of youth, the skeptic mystical and ironic, the affectionate and just Socrates of Plato's pages. The scholars, including Taylor, in the volume before us, and Burnet, and Rogers who here reservedly follows their lead, agree on this point. If one were seriously to follow their conclusions, then, one ought to turn from the scholars themselves and read Plato himself in order to know Socrates *de tout près.*

None the less Professor A. E. Taylor, doubtless the dean of Platonic scholars, has written a useful little book. It will help to make clear to the unprofessional reader just what canons of credibility and insight are to be attached to the three chief sources, Xenophon, Plato, and Aristophanes. Relying chiefly on the "Dialogues," very skilfully but with corrective and amplifying material from cognate writers, it gives the main features of the "life of Socrates." It indicates the necessity for revision of certain notions widespread even among the supposedly well informed. Thus it is made clear that, despite the Alexandrian tradition that Socrates was a stonecutter, there is very little evidence for the legend. Though it is intimated, and in no less a place than the "Theaetetus," that Socrates's mother was a midwife, she was not professionally such. Socrates came of a "good" family socially and economically. He was not a "proletarian"; until the reverses he suffered in the general crisis after a disastrous war, he was a man of income. Again, though it is common to repeat that Socrates brought philosophy from heaven to earth, Professor Taylor makes it quite clear that he was versed in the science of his time, and, despite his predominant moral interest, for a considerable time much concerned with it. The book reminds us of the almost strictly political significance of the trial. Space does not permit Professor Taylor's evidence to be cited here; his conclusions are arresting:

> Socrates was feared by certain prominent politicians as the supposed instigator of Alcibiades and Critias, and these politicians desired to get him out of Athens. But there was no wish to take his life, and he can never have been the mark of general hostility. Nearly 45 per cent of his judges were for acquitting him. . . . Socrates owes his immortality of fame as the martyr of philosophy not to any melodramatic outburst of popular sentiment on the part of an emotional democracy, but to the Providence which gave him as a younger friend and follower—Plato.

"The Socratic Problem" for Professor Rogers is, briefly: Which, in Plato, is Socrates and which is Plato? With his perhaps unduly schematized treatment of Socrates the Moralist, Socrates the Mystic, and Socrates the Scientist few readers will quarrel. One has only to read Plato to see that his hero was all three. But the thesis Mr. Rogers maintains seems to this reader, for all the careful (and dull) argument invoked to sustain it, unconvincing. "It has been my purpose," writes Mr. Rogers after one hundred and sixty-two pages, "to show that only by rendering to Plato the things that are Plato's and to Socrates the things that are Socrates's are we likely to get a consistent picture of either Plato, the scientist and metaphysician, or Socrates, the moralist and mystic." Despite all the detailed discussion, in the course of which the author seems to have forgotten Plato and Socrates in favor of their commentators, the book seems to me signally to fail to maintain the thesis whose proof was its *raison d'être.* It is too long a matter to argue here, and argument seems scarcely to the purpose. If the author of the "Symposium" and the "Phaedrus" was not something of a mystic, and the author of the "Republic" and "Philebus" not a moralist, then Plato must have had a ghost writer, and Bacon must have written Shakespeare. If the "Dialogues" of Plato are the best source for the life of Socrates, they are certainly the best source for the mind and spirit of Plato.

IRWIN EDMAN

Pastoral Fable, New Style

Stranger's Return. By Phil Stong. Harcourt, Brace and Company $2.

WHEN "Turn to the Right" was touring Chautauqua boards, the idyl celebrating the well-known salubrity of rural life ticked itself off in scenes wherein immoral and life-weary New Yorkers rediscovered purity under sunbonnets and wholesome love in gingham frocks; a gray-haired mother revived the ancient verities; gin fumes were washed away in air perfumed by climbing roses and browsing cows; the culture of chickens carried with it a life-giving elixir; and in return for these benefits, the grateful metropolites did not fail to take care of the mortgage crisis when it came.

Phil Stong has varied the fable somewhat, to meet modern tastes. The rural salubrity is all there: Louise, the penitent New Yorker, watches the cider-pressing and "is enormously content," serves the threshing crew and feels "that she be-

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longed to this robust and hearty life"; but in the new version, the sweet and Puritan virtues are not stressed. In fact, Stong's Iowa is pictured as combining all the wholesomeness of the farmyard with the amoral and even cultural possibilities of the penthouse. The hired man plays the role of a willing and lusty satyr; liaisons flourish in hay mow and oak grove. Corn whiskey and aged cider flow. A neighboring young farmer-hero, sculped in lines of blonde litheness, writes scholarly monographs on agricultural science, quotes Whitman, and discusses Forbes-Robertson and Leiber's Hamlet. Grandpa Storr remarks nonchalantly on a "fine old-fashioned hangover," and announces his untrammeled philosophy in the assertion that people should "have the God-damned kindness to attend to their own lives" while he attends to his. Repartee at the threshing table and over a boundary fence is represented as having a subtlety superior to conversation in MacDougal Street.

But outside the new freedom and sophistication, Stong's rural fable does not differ much from "Turn to the Right." In a plot which creaks and groans, the New York girl with her shady past makes good according to rustic criterions; true love culminates; the farm is saved from scheming parasites; and the redoubtable Grandpa Storr, aged eighty-five, after being pictured sitting his saddle lithe as a young man, holding his own with the threshing crew, and consuming plates full of rich food at every meal, passes away overnight, happy in the knowledge that Storrhaven will descend to the right hands.

Stong is not always happy in his details of Iowa life and idiom. "Damn your eyes!" is not very usual as an expletive from an Iowa patriarch, and the hired man has hardly yet picked up the wise-crack, "You old so-and-so." But such criticisms are not particularly relevant to a fiction for whose setting a bit of cardboard rural scenery labeled New Jersey, Maine, or Oregon would do equally well.

FERNER NUHN

Progress: the Bathtub Theory

A Century of Progress. Edited by Charles A. Beard. Harper and Brothers. $3.

THIS symposium, like the Chicago fair, only in less portentous form, is a composite of curious detail, ambitious design, and fake splendor. It constitutes little more than a flatulent paean of praise to American achievement, past, present and future. But the voices of the authors are too high-pitched to convince or inspire. Most of them suffer from the bathtub complex, an all too familiar American affliction, which makes them view progress as a sanitary instead of a spiritual reality. No doubt the America which moved about on foot and on horseback a century ago was a less progressive country than the one which today whirls about in motor cars and airplanes. The more important question, however, is who has reaped the benefits from that progress, and to what degree. To that question the present symposium contributes nothing but a parade of empty words about "the spirit of humanity which is building institutions of welfare and providing security for worthy dependency" and a declaration that "for the single goal of private greed is being substituted a social objective—mass production for the people under favorable conditions of labor, a wide distribution of wealth through increased wages, the general diffusion of the benefits of civilization with a view to its stability." What does such rhetoric mean to the millions of men who cannot get work in America today? Why, in a volume of this kind, in which there are chapters on Labor, Industry, and Agriculture, is there no mention of those millions at a time when their suffering is crucial? Is it, perhaps, because "the century of progress" was not really interested in them at all, but in the progress of machines at the expense of men?

"A Century of Progress" is composed of fifteen essays, two of which are written by the editor, Charles A. Beard. At least half of them are pathetically feeble. Henry Ford's essay on Industry (written in collaboration with Samuel Crowther) is typical. When it is not an elaboration of the obvious, it is a contribution to the absurd. "Industry now exists," states Mr. Ford through his ventriloquist, Mr. Crowther, "as a large public service and not as a private perquisite," and then adds that part of our great progress has come from *"the knowledge we are gaining of how to use everything in the public interest* while preserving the full advantage of individual initiative." (Italics mine.) Frank O. Lowden's article on Agriculture is a rehash of old stuff without even the semblance of a new conclusion. William Green's essay on Labor is a combination of bad history and weak-kneed apologetics which illustrates just why the American Federation of Labor has developed into a "safe and sane" company union. Grace Abbott, Charles H. Judd, Fiske Kimball, John Erskine, and Jane Addams succeed, as if by special strategy, in saying not a single thing that is new, important, or challenging in their respective essays on Women, Education, the Arts, Literature, and The Process of Social Transformation. The only essays of any value in the symposium are Waldemar Kaempffert's on Invention as a Social Manifestation, which is by far the best contribution to the book, Fielding H. Garrison's on Medicine, and Charles Beard's on Government and Law.

V. F. CALVERTON

Too Much of a Good Thing

Pull Devil, Pull Baker. By Stella Benson. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

IT is one of the difficulties of this book, whether in praising or criticizing it, that its humor and effects rely chiefly on elaborate misspellings and mutilations of the English language which have to be seen to be understood. It is supposed to be a series of stories related in China to Miss Benson by an old humbug and adventurer, Count Nicolas de Toulouse Lautrec de Savine. The count writes and speaks a quaint English, of which this is a fair sample: "The most ones of our officers had sweethearts, but I was to yang and to inconstant to bound me with a gerl; prefair to flay from one to a other, as butterflay who flay from one flower to a other one." "Hyg," "sansation," "thogth," "smole and fin," "fecheneble," and "yahrs" are also favorites of his. When one reads a single chapter, the device is amusing; one does get a vivid, lifelike impression of a certain type of Russian English. But there is a large volume of it, and the effect becomes deadening.

Added to that drawback is the fact that the stories all harp on one string, the count's adventures with beautiful "gerls," "noty gerls," and the most fashionable society in every part of the world. Again, as in the device of the spelling, one's first impression is that Miss Benson has given an entertaining picture of a typical Russian fortune-hunter, gambler, and adventurer of the old regime. The stories of debts, usurers, drinking, hunting, love-making recur, however, so fatally, that it is hard to sustain one's interest beyond a chapter or two. Scattered in various periodicals, as they originally were, they concealed a defect which their collection between book covers only serves to emphasize.

There will, I suppose, always be differences of opinion as to the effectiveness in a lengthy work of freakish spelling and grammar, of excessive use of dialect. As one who has always admired Miss Benson's work, I find myself, in this instance,

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disagreeing with a number of her reviewers in this country. It may be a radical defect in my early education which always prevented me from enjoying Mr. Dooley or any of the earlier comic characters which had such an enormous vogue with the American public. A literary device, especially when humorous, has always seemed to me appropriate only to short, occasional pieces. It not only loses its effect by repetition, when serially employed, but can become a perfect bore when used throughout the length of an entire book. People who do not feel that way about it will undoubtedly like Miss Benson's effort. Her count, whether real or imaginary, should serve as a diversion and a warning to American heiresses, who have been known to be captivated by types no more authentic of Russian noblesse.

ERNEST BOYD

The Generation That Made the War

Beginning the Twentieth Century. By Joseph Ward Swain. W. W. Norton and Company. $4.75.

PROFESSOR SWAIN, we are told, spent ten years in preparing this "history of the generation that made the war." He has turned out a thorough, workmanlike job, one of the best of the many conventional studies of pre-war diplomacy and politics. It reveals an amazing amount of diligent and conscientious effort. It is painstakingly impartial, but its impartiality is never labored or obtrusive. In reading the book one does not feel, as is so often the case with the somewhat similar works of Gooch, Fay, Barnes, Schmitt, and other scholars, that the author is playing the role of special advocate. He comments, explains, and interprets, but rarely argues. Nor does Professor Swain place too much emphasis on the war-guilt question, though his work is essentially a study of that question. He seems to realize that the war-guilt controversy is today without practical importance except in so far as it enables students to measure and understand the significance of the present diplomatic struggle in Europe. Moreover, in the view of Professor Swain no single diplomat or set of diplomats was responsible for the war. A whole generation of men was guilty:

> Inheritors of a great tradition, these men accomplished much that was fine and that will remain a possession forever. They realized the dreams of 1848 with greater splendor than the dreamers had dreamed of, and they did much besides. Perhaps their glory will grow with the passage of time. But for those of us who belong to the next generation this glory is always darkened by the tragedy which finally overwhelmed them. In the end they debauched everything that they had. They turned their boasted science to finding new methods of butchery. They used their marvelous economic system to maintain hosts for slaughter. They prostituted their noblest ideals as war propaganda. They made their sons cannon fodder. In the eyes of those of their children who escaped from this holocaust they must ever remain a generation which spoke eloquently and much of liberty and humanity and science and progress, and which drove millions of young men to their death in the most gigantic folly of all history.

Excellent as this work is from the technical point of view, it has a number of faults. The author has a strong dislike for the Marxian theory of economic determinism (though he does not openly say so), and apparently cannot even stomach such modern history-writing as that of Charles A. Beard. He labors under the absurd notion that men alone make history. This leads him into strange errors. It traps him when he seeks to reduce the activities of international bankers to a formula based on personal motives, and again when he attempts to define economic imperialism. On Page 66, for example, he asserts that the *Welt-politik* of pre-war Germany was adopted "because it was a sign of greatness." He declares that the German expansionists had to "invent" economic arguments for colonialism. But on Page 78 he confesses that Germany was under great pressure to find new markets: "Because of the sluggish state of the German markets, manufacturers were forced to 'dump' large quantities of goods abroad, especially in Russia, selling their products at little or no profit in whatever markets they could find." Again, one gathers the impression through the first part of Chapter VII that the Balkan question and especially the controversy between Austria and Serbia consisted mainly in a conflict of personalities. Then suddenly on Page 154 one learns that the greed of the Magyar landlords, the Serbian pig trade, and other economic factors played a large part in the Balkan quarrels. For instance:

> The ensuing tariff war between the two countries [1906] was so severe that for several years almost nothing was imported into Austria from Serbia. Since pork was the chief Serbian export, this quarrel was called the "pig war." Serbia having no access to the sea, other markets were difficult to find, and Austria's action was a disaster for the farmers who made up most of the population of Serbia. The popular outcry against Austria was great.

Despite this and much similar evidence that the author himself presents, he feels it necessary to speak slightingly of "newspaper hacks or ponderous professors" who, after the war, "endeavored to rewrite all history in terms of a struggle for economic advantage—which was a popular sport during those chaotic days." Professor Swain's inadequate understanding of economic imperialism and economic determinism has also led him to miss completely the import of the Russian revolution. His chapter on this subject is by far the weakest in the book. He has performed a worthy task in summing up clearly and intelligently the diplomatic history of the pre-war period. If he had taken as much pains with the economic aspects of that period, he might have produced an enduring masterpiece.

MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Mildly French

Madame Maillart. By Claude Aveline. E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.35.

ANNOUNCED as "the story of a strange human drama of the day and night life of a great hospital," this turns out to be merely another of those innumerable fluttery novels of young love shadowed by a *femme fatale* of sinister maturity that have cluttered French bookstalls for more decades than anyone cares to remember. The woman who gives her name to the novel is the thirty-nine-year-old wife of a diplomat implicated in an international financial scandal. Mme. Maillart is lonely and neurotic, hungry for a lover and frantic at the realization that she is no longer young. When the nineteen-year-old Philippe, whom the author tries to make engagingly naive and sparkling but who succeeds in being merely callow, comes to the hospital, Mme. Maillart lays a snare for him and tries to seduce him. But he, all unaware of her passion, becomes instead by degrees enamored of her protégée, Madeleine de Charmes, a spineless and colorless *jeune fille*. Most of the novel is given over to the intolerable account of this calf-love, which meanders through endless chaste encounters, touchings of garments and hands, sighs, sleepless nights, exchanges of notes, sled-rides in moonlight, stratagems to circumvent the vigilance of nurses, and so on *ad nauseam*. A few episodes have a touch of reality and occasional observations have sharpness. But as a whole the book is full of missed opportunities—for the material

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is there. No depths are touched. One page of Colette's "Chéri" contains more perception and pathos and beauty in the evocation of a woman's autumn than this whole novel.

HAAKON M. CHEVALIER

Shorter Notices

History of Germany. By Hermann Pinnow. Translated from the German by Mabel Brailsford. The Macmillan Company. $2.75.

A good short history of Germany would be valuable at this time. It is a pity to have a report that we cannot find it in this volume. Dr. Pinnow is only half-convinced of, or perhaps has only half mastered the materialistic interpretation of history. His treatment is a quite hopeless confusion of economics, mystical nationalism, and sentimental optimism.

The Geography of Strabo. Vol. VIII. Translated by H. L. Jones. *Pausanias: Description of Greece. Vol. III.* Translated by W. H. S. Jones. *Cicero: De Natura Deorum; Academica.* Translated by H. Rackham. Loeb Classical Library. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.50 per volume.

Of these new volumes in the Loeb Classical Library, the first brings Strabo to his conclusion with a most valuable index of three hundred pages; the second is a rendering of Books VI to VIII of Pausanias; and the third continues with Cicero's philosophical works, the two dialogues here given being translated by the same able hand which did the "De Finibus."

The Rash Act. By Ford Madox Ford. Ray Long and Richard Smith. $2.50.

A study in exchanged identities, "The Rash Act" recalls Pirandello in theme and Norman Douglas in its mood and locale. In the fantastic Nepenthe-land of southern France, two veterans of the war, an Englishman and an American, set out to commit suicide. Though love and money are the precipitating causes, they are actually motivated by a deeply rooted neurosis—a sense of weariness with this world and nostalgia for a better way of living. In spite of the seriousness of his theme, Mr. Ford's handling of it is sophisticated rather than profound, and consists of a clever manipulation of the externalities of the contemporary scene. His characters do not emerge as autonomous, three-dimensional figures, nor do they involve us emotionally in their psychic impasse. But in the series of flashbacks that precede their attempts at suicide Mr. Ford gives us sufficient documentation of their lives, and enough evidence of the times, to convince us—intellectually, at least—that we are witnessing a typical modern instance.

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Films

Panorama

IT is natural enough that the success of "Cavalcade" should inspire various Hollywood producers to attempt similar chronicles of American life and history during the same period. Certainly the larger historical developments have been as exciting here as in England, the drama of change, in manners, morals, and public taste, at least as rich and full of contrasts. The only question is whether such full scale attempts as the screen version of Frederick Allen Lewis's "Only Yesterday," for example, will be able to achieve quite the same effectiveness of theme and pattern. Behind the rapid movement of national events and individual circumstance in "Cavalcade," always present or at least suggested, was something fixed and immutable, a way of living and thinking to which was attached the authority and accumulated sentiment of ages—something that might be called the English spirit or, more simply, England. It was on the contrast between what was and what has happened that the emotion depended from beginning to end. Without this continuous reference to the past, the changes it recorded would have been without meaning or power to affect us. The emotion may have been reducible to a kind of sentimental nostalgia, the substance of the closing lines to a pretty futile rhetoric. But without the strong notion of tradition at its base there would have been neither emotion nor meaning, in other words, nothing to justify, artistically or otherwise, its excavations out of the recent past. Now it is a commonplace that in America we have so many traditions that it sometimes seems as if we have none at all. It is also safe to say that in general the American public is pretty apathetic to the appeals of tradition, so much so that probably our strongest tradition has always been a turning from the realized past to the less definite and usually more comforting appeals of the unrealized future. If one did not abuse the word too much, one might say that our only nostalgia has been for the future. And nostalgia for the future is, for dramatic purposes at least, a weaker emotion even than nostalgia for the past. It is for this reason that one has such grave misgivings about the American "Cavalcades" on the way, many of which have already been confirmed by the current "This Is America" (Rivoli), which is of course not to be judged in the same way as a work of art, since it consists of a compilation of newsreels rather than a preconceived arrangement of its subject. Its subject is the zigzag course of American social and economic development since 1917 as recorded by the newsreel camera from week to week during the period. Many of its scenes—those of Woodrow Wilson's last tour, the Lindbergh parade, Calvin Coolidge in Indian feathers—we remember having seen before and are glad to see again. It is also interesting to trace the bizarre logic of time in the manner that certain of them are related—the Lindbergh parade followed by the kidnapping of his child, and so on. In such a film much depends on the cutting, and for the first two-thirds it must be admitted that events pass before our eyes with the break-neck speed that such recent material requires, and that the transitions are sharp and pictorially well managed. Not until the last portion does the montage, like everything else, begin to suffer from the absence of anything like a consistent point of view or reference. At the end we are unsure what the picture has been aiming at or for; the speaker who explains and comments throughout has been "pulling his punches" as if for some great final blow or message, but all that we are left with is the reiterated assurance that this *is* America, with perhaps an insinuation of fascist liberalism which

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may be taken or not as one wishes. Here again we are to forget the past in favor of a future in which a bright new light will shine over the White House. Hopefulness is substituted for nostalgia.

"The Strange Case of Tom Mooney" is also a collection of newsreels, still photographs, and documents. It is somewhat shorter than it should be for its purpose, which is to persuade the American public of the injustice surrounding Mooney's seventeen-year imprisonment. Unfortunately not very many pictures of the trial seem to have been available, and the warehouse shots of the Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco, the photographs of the judges and witnesses, communicate too little of the special drama involved in the case. Much the most moving thing in the film is Mooney's own direct address to the public, delivered from prison and with such obvious sincerity of tone and expression that it should be more effective than anything else with that section of the public which still doubts his innocence.

Although "Pilgrimage" (Gaiety) has opened to louder critical praise than any picture in months, it is hard to regard it as anything more important than a rather synthetic box-office attraction compounded of war, motherhood, and local color. Not only does it seem like a résumé of all the mother pictures from "Over the Hill" to "The Silver Cord," but it borrows heavily from "Sun Up" and "Tol'able David." It is true that the long prologue, dealing with the stern Arkansas farm woman who refuses to accept her son's fiancée or even his child after he is killed in France, has enough honesty in the acting and directing to set up hopes of something much better than what follows. The director, John Ford, has learned something about the use of light from the Russians, and appropriates the René Clair device of musically accompanied dialogue to advantage in several places. But the moment the main idea emerges, the acting, direction, and photography suffer alike from the rambling scenario. Hannah Jessop goes to Paris with the Gold Star mothers, has adventures on a bridge over the Seine, and ends up by begging her dead son's forgiveness over his grave on the battlefield. Some of the comedy and much of the pathos of the Gold Star expedition are brought out, but when one considers the possibilities of the subject one cannot but regret the obvious manner in which it is handled. Even Lucille LaVerne's lusty repetition of her pipe-smoking act from "Sun Up" does not save this part of the picture. Before it is over, Henrietta Crosman's superbly austere mountain woman becomes a doddering, melodramatic old sentimentalist whom one is glad to see the last of. What is most regrettable about "Pilgrimage" is the waste of so much good material and competent talent through a stupidly developed scenario.

WILLIAM TROY

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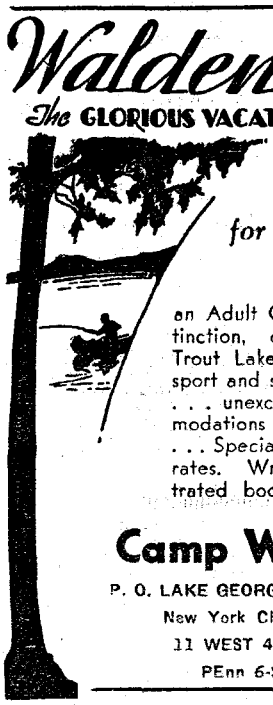

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